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THE REPENTANCE OF  
MAGDALENÈ DESPAR

FROM A BOOK FUND COMMEMORATING  
RUTH GERALDINE ASHEN  
CLASS OF 1931

It's a sad thing  
when a man is to be so soon forgotten  
And the shining in his soul  
gone from the earth  
With no thing remaining;

And it's a sad thing  
when a man shall die  
And forget love  
which is the shiningness of life;

But it's a sadder thing  
that a man shall forget love  
And he not dead but walking in the field  
of a May morning  
And listening to the voice of the thrush.

— R.G.A., in *A Yearbook of  
Stanford Writing*, 1931

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THE REPENTANCE  
OF  
MAGDALENÈ DESPAR

*AND OTHER POEMS.*

BY  
G. ESSEX EVANS.

**London:**  
SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON,  
LIMITED  
ST. DUNSTON'S HOUSE, FETTER LANE, FLEET STREET.  
1891.

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With. W. S. Browne's Compl  
To  
Mrs. B. B. Calvert.

To recall pleasant memories of her  
rest to her native land, and increase  
her admiration for the poet whom she  
saw in the spring time of her youth.

DEDICATION. Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> 1922  
In Memoriam: M. A. G.

January, 22, 1890.

I.

Beyond the deepening shadows of Death's night  
God giveth perfect light;  
When earthly love and light no more can shine  
He giveth love divine;  
And on the weary heart, where sorrows cease,  
He sets His seal of Peace.

II.

His Rest is sure, His Love is strong and deep.  
Why should we weep  
For those who, in the silence gently stirred,  
His Angel's voice have heard,  
And following, passed, led by a tender hand  
Into the Unknown Land?

So do not pay you fear to dwell,  
Where skies are grey and winds are chill  
The radiance of a summer clime,  
Will linger round your presence still  
And when, through other scenes you roam  
And other voices greet your ear,  
Your thoughts at times may wander  
To dwell with some who smile you here

P. 117

Carden:  
Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 1922 2<sup>da</sup>

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## THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.

### PART I.

#### I.

“O THE richness of Morn! O the freshness of  
Spring!

When the heart is upborne as a bird on the wing;  
When the fire in the hearts of the poets bursts forth in  
the songs that they sing;

“In the depths of my heart when my girlhood was  
young

I have felt myself part of the songs that they sung,  
Of words that were mingled with music in measures that  
trembled and swung;

“When I dreamt that the world was made only  
for me—

The white waves that curled on the shores of the  
sea—

The myst'ry of Nature—the breath of the Spirit that  
broods over forest and lea.

“In the midst of the wild as a wild-flower I grew

With the heart of a child that was tender and true  
In the calm of seclusion unbroken where pleasures were  
simple and few.

8 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*


"I can see my home still, the wide view it commands  
From the crest of the hill where the head-station  
stands  
O'erlooking the waste of blue waters that circle the shimmering sands.

"In the bright bygone hours never shadowed by  
care,  
In a garden of flowers where the roses were fair,  
They held me the Queen of the Roses—the purest and  
stateliest there.

"Not till then had I known that I wore on my  
face  
As a light that is thrown from a heavenly place  
The jewel of beauty, impearled on my brow, the sign-  
manual of fairness and grace.

"Tho' I knew not of love, of the radiance that  
gleams  
As a light from above, as the glint of bright beams  
That colour the grayness of Life with the richness and  
beauty of dreams ;

"Yet I formed an ideal of the fancies that start,  
Of whispers that steal from the depths of the heart,  
And I mused o'er a love that was deathless, that sorrow  
and pain could not part."



*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENE DESPAR. 9*

II.

“In the youth of the year  
When Winter is dead and the strength of her reign has  
    been broken,  
When Nature has donned the soft colours of Spring as a  
    token,  
And hearts that were weary are filled with a gladness  
    unspoken  
    That Spring-time is here ;

“When on forest and plain  
Rich hues lie unsullied, reborn in their brightness and  
    splendour,  
In dark-green and emerald, carmine and azure, tints  
    subtle and tender,  
Fresh from the hand of the Artist Immortal, the touch  
    of the Sender  
    Who paints them again ;

“When solitudes teem  
With the life and the glory with which all existence is  
    glowing,  
When laden with music and rich with perfume the slow  
    zephyrs are blowing,  
When Spring waxing strong with the strength of young  
    days into Summer is growing,  
    I woke from my dream.

“And, waking, I passed  
From the dreaming of visions whose influence held me  
    and bound me  
To the light of a faith and the strength of a love that will  
    ever be round me,  
For here, on the desolate station, the Fate that I dreamt  
    of had found me—  
    Had found me at last !

“Not the hero and lord  
Of the castles I built in the hours of an indolent leisure,  
Not the youth in the flush of his prime seeking beauty  
and pleasure,  
Whose heart was afire with high hope and a love without  
measure  
For her he adored.

“Not such was the man  
To whom I had given the best gift that a woman possesses,  
The faith of a heart yet untouched when her soft voice  
confesses  
The passionate sweetness of Love with its sighs and  
caresses—  
Giving all that she can.

“The autumn of life  
Had silvered the locks once as dark as the wing of the  
raven,  
Had tempered the passions that oft make a strong spirit  
craven,  
And Time's rugged ploughshare on face and on brow had  
engraven  
The scars of the strife.

“In his eyes Love still sees  
That light that in sorrow or trouble burns brighter and  
clearer  
From the soul of a strong man and just, to whom honour  
is dearer  
Than wealth or high fame or soft ties that are firmer and  
nearer  
And better than these.

*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 11*

“Why need be retold  
What is old as the Earth is, but still in its passion and  
yearning  
Is new, ever new, with its longings, hopes, fears, and  
heart-burning,  
Is new, ever new, to the heart that its soft creed is  
learning—  
The new tale that is old ?

“O light was my heart  
When the bells from the church on my marriage morn  
gaily were pealing,  
And we on the steps of God's altar together were kneeling  
And uttered our vows before Him who our compact was  
sealing  
Till Death did us part.

“Ah ! Why had they said  
Not age with gray hairs and grave face for bright youth  
was created,  
Only Youth in the glow of Life's morning with Youth  
should be mated ?  
Ah ! Why do those words haunt me now in these days  
evil-fated  
When I would I were dead ? ”

III.

“Life is like a mighty river rolling onward to the sea,  
Past low meadows, rocky headlands, still it flows un-  
ceasingly,  
Swerves in curves, and flows in stretches, ever varying its  
force  
As the banks contract or broaden in the channels of its  
course.

12 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

But to all who sail its waters comes a time when Fate  
may glide  
Slowly, calmly, gently onwards with the ripples of its tide ;  
So to me ere yet I dreamt of aught of sorrow, shame, or ill,  
Came a time of sweet contentment when my days were  
pure and still.

" Four long years we lived together on the station by the  
sea,  
Far from that old well-loved homestead which had been  
the world to me ;  
Here no belts of yellow sandbanks form a stretch of  
shimm'ring strand,  
But the beetling crags and headlands rise abrupt on either  
hand ;  
And for gentle ripples falling with slow music on the  
shore,  
Wild and high above the storm wind you may hear the  
breakers roar.  
Four long years in cloud and sunshine lived we on this  
rugged coast,  
Where the cries of wand'ring sea-birds seem the wailings  
of a ghost ;  
Where on winter eves at midnight bursts the giant hurri-  
cane,  
Shakes the four walls of the station till the timbers start  
again.

. . . . .  
" Four long years in cloud and sunshine lived we by the  
restless sea,  
Where each day was as another in its calm monotony ;  
But my heart was changing slowly, and I felt with secret  
pain  
Friendship take the place of Love where only Love itself  
should reign.



*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 13*

Was it only woman's fancy made me think him cold,  
austere—

Till I felt the love I bore him tempered with an unknown  
fear ?

Was it that my heart rebellious scorned that grave and  
courteous air,

Longing for a wilder spirit with more fire to do and dare ?  
Wrapt in cares of which he spoke not, tho' his smile was  
kind and mild—

I, a wife, with woman's longings, to be treated as a child !  
So I nursed my wrongs in silence, musing o'er my wounded  
pride,

Till a barrier grew between us whom no barrier should  
divide.

Often in those days I fancied I could hear those words of  
truth—

'Youth, not age with fifty winters, should be wedded unto  
youth.'

"Three long years in cloud and sunshine we had watched  
our darling grow

Like a flower upon the mountain, bright as light, and pure  
as snow ;

Only one was mine to cherish, but a fairy full of grace,  
In whose laughing eyes and features once again I saw my  
face ;

All the love and all the yearning in a heart as wild as mine,  
All my hopes and my ambition centred in this gift divine.  
Where to southward of the station lies a little sanded bay,  
Bringing back to me the memory of a careless childhood's  
day,

Here at times I oft would linger with the child in early  
spring,

Dreaming of the Unknown Future, wond'ring what the  
years would bring.

14 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

"Was it that a curse from Heaven lingered over mine  
and me ?  
Oft methought I heard God's anger in the moaning of  
the sea ;  
For the child I loved so dearly, the sole solace of my  
pride,  
Like a flower before the storm blast sickened in the Spring  
and died.  
And we laid her in her beauty on the cliffs beside the bay,  
Where so oft at morn and evening I had watched her  
careless play.  
On the dark and pine-crowned mountain lies her lonely  
little grave,  
And for dirge we heard the sea-wind and the beating of  
the wave.

"Then for days I lay in fever, shrieking with fierce voice  
and wild ;  
Cursing God and cursing Nature for the deathbed of my  
child.  
And beneath its weight of sorrow slowly my proud spirit  
sank,  
Till at last my senses left me and my life became a blank.

. . . . .

"Weak and ill at last I wakened from that dark and  
dismal night,  
But the world seemed changed around me and the  
sunshine lost its light ;  
And the Springs of Hope were withered, and love's flame  
had ceased to burn,  
And I knew a power had left me that would never more  
return."

PART II.

I.

“Changed I was, my love grown colder, vivid fancies  
thronged my brain,  
Forms and faces hovered round me, and I turned from  
them in vain ;  
And a madness fired my spirit till I could not bear the  
place  
Haunted by the tender memory of one little childish face.

“So at last we sold the station, left that wild and rugged  
shore,  
Changed the calm of Nature’s fastness for the busy city’s  
roar.  
For the years had made us wealthy, richer far than those  
we met,  
And I longed for some excitement that would teach me  
to forget.

“In those days of calm seclusion I had thought not of  
the worth  
Of the royal gift of beauty Nature gave me at my birth.  
*Then* a girl unformed and simple, *now* a woman ‘midst  
my peers,  
And my mirror showed my beauty had but ripened with  
the years.  
What to woman were gold tresses, Grecian face, imperial  
form,  
But to hold mankind in bondage and to take the world  
by storm ?

“Statelier than all women round me, with an air of  
careless pride  
Little cared I for their hatred with men thronging to my  
side.

16 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

Still my husband, ever with me, spoke no word and made  
no sign  
That he knew the gulf was widening fast between his life  
and mine.  
So I plunged into the vortex of a wild and reckless set,  
Ever seeking fresh excitement that would teach me to  
forget.

"Was it only sorrow drove me to those scenes with folly  
rife?  
Or the thought of something missing in the lottery of  
life?  
Often came again the memories of a better, purer day,  
When at morn from heated ballrooms swift our carriage  
rolled away.  
Who shall read a woman's secret? or divine what women  
think?  
One kind word perchance had saved me when I trembled  
on the brink,  
But his coldness numbed my spirit, and I moved unto my  
fate,  
Love first changing into friendship, friendship changing  
into hate.

"Well I knew my beauty lingered as a theme on every  
tongue,  
And I learnt to love the homage of the men who round  
me hung,  
Till the thirst for admiration at last became a daily  
need—  
Ah! what misery in the sowing of that single deadly  
seed!  
Fatal is the gift of beauty to a woman weak and proud;  
Better far for her the features of the homeliest in the  
crowd.

*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 17*

Drinking of the wine of flattery till its fumes had turned  
my brain,  
Thinking only of the worship of the fools who thronged  
my train,  
Conquest but succeeded conquest when all bowed beneath  
my spell,  
Till in all the pride and splendour of my vanity—I fell.”

II.

“O, fain would I hide  
Myself and my shame in the depths of the fathomless sea,  
Beneath storm, beyond calm, where no echoes of past days  
can be ;

In a tomb deep and wide  
Where wrapt in a mantle of darkness and peace I might  
slumber afar  
From the noise of a world where the voices of Sorrow and  
Memory are.

“Hope ! Is there hope ?  
Ah ! the hope that shall shine in the gloom of the Valley  
of Death ;  
Yea ! E'en 'neath the wings of dark Azrael, the chill of  
his breath ;

What courage can cope  
With Fate when repentance avails not, tho' tears may  
have fallen like rain ?  
Can the rose that is soiled in the dust of the way its lost  
beauty regain ?

“Peace ! Is there Peace ?  
Ah ! the peace that is hers whom no woman forgets or  
forgives !  
The stigma of shame that no penitence ever outlives !  
For her shall not cease

18 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

The frost of contempt and keen words and the stings of  
the arrows of scorn.  
Ah! better for her who shall fall in her pride had she  
never been born!

“Light! Is there light  
In the deepening of shadows gigantic that gather and  
roll—  
In the veils of black darkness o’erwhelming the shudder-  
ing soul

Like wings of the night?  
Not from man, not from woman, comes mercy to those  
who shame’s pathway have trod.  
Hope, Peace, Light, alone can be found in the infinite  
mercy of God.

“O pitiless fate!  
O frailty of woman! that heeds not tho’ danger be clear,  
That stifles the voices of warning, refusing to hear—  
That hears when too late!  
Canst thou cleanse the soiled lily of honour by pain and  
remorse of long years,  
Tho’ thou cherish its life with thine anguish and water  
its petals with tears?

“O for pow’r to forget  
When Mem’ry is madness, and thought as the stabbing of  
swords,  
When the sneer of contempt and the lingering sting of  
his words

Are haunting me yet!  
‘I have torn thy false face from my heart, thou art  
nothing to me save a name,  
And o’er thee shall linger for ever the horror and curse  
of thy shame.’

*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.* 19

“ Ah ! where shall I find  
Some refuge of darkness, some cave of oblivion, deep-  
hidden, serene,  
Where hushed are the voices of Mem'ry and shades of  
the past are unseen,  
Where the senses grow blind  
'Neath the spell of a peace that is brooding supreme o'er  
an echoless shore,  
And the dreams of dead hopes and lost honour shall  
reach me and haunt me no more ? ”

III.

“ How weary the years  
To the heart that is reckless of aught that the future may  
bring !  
That heeds not the glory of summer, the freshness of  
spring ;

When sorrow and tears  
And the sharp aching throb of remorse burn fiercely like  
fire in the brain,  
And only the ghosts of past days and the shadow of evil  
remain.

“ I have learnt he is dead ;  
Nor ever again shall I list to that voice once so tender  
and true—  
Nor ever again shall I see that strong face which no fear  
could subdue.

I have learnt he is dead ;  
He has fallen enthroned with the brave in their glory,  
yet scorning to yield or to flee,  
But breathing no word of forgiveness—and leaving no  
message for me.

“ I have learnt that he fell  
'Midst the storm of the battle that raged far away on the  
hot blinding sand,  
Serving unknown in the regiment where once he had  
held a command ;  
And the sound of his knell  
Was the thunder of cannon, the rattle of bullets swift  
hissing like rain,  
And his shroud was the flag he defended—his bier was a  
mound of the slain.

“ Methought that I woke  
'Midst the combat, and saw the blue gleaming of steel  
bristling bare ;  
But haggard and white were the faces that manned the  
four sides of the square ;  
Then came the long stroke  
Of galloping hoofs shaking earth in their thunder, and  
peal upon peal,  
Then the crash and recoil of the squadrons that reeled  
from those walls of blue steel.

“ 'Midst murderous rain,  
The square closing up, filling gaps made by dying and  
dead,  
Returning with volleys defiant each death-dealing chal-  
lenge of lead ;  
Then sounded again  
The rush of wild steeds, and the redd'ning of sabres, the  
loud grinding shock,  
Where alone 'midst the waves of the battle those heroes  
stood firm as a rock.



*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 21*

“ Ah ! I saw him still there,  
Unmoved 'midst the gleaming of sword play, the canon's deep roar,  
In one hand the flag that he guarded, in one the long  
sabre he wore ;

His thin silver hair  
Streamed wild in the breath of the battle, and full on his  
resolute face  
Was the glow and the light of a spirit that yields not, but  
dies in its place.

“ But it was not to last,  
For swift the dark squadrons had rallied—the square was  
a handful of men,  
And the strength of the foe unto theirs was e'en greater  
than sixty to ten ;

Till, wild as the blast,  
One desperate charge overwhelmed them, yet dying they  
scorned still to yield,  
And fighting they fell at their posts every man—but  
mown down like the grass of the field.

“ My heart is as stone,  
But the tears of my grief will not flow tho' I would I  
could weep  
For the mem'ry of Love that was tender and faith that  
my folly held cheap,

Ah ! too late we own,  
With tones of self scorn and upbraiding and pangs of  
unquenchable pain  
That we know not the worth of a heart till we lose it  
and seek it in vain.

22 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

“Perchance it is best ;  
I have wronged him in thought and in deed by a wrong  
that no tears can repair.  
Ah ! would it were *I* and not *he* who was lying in majesty  
there !

He has found a last rest,  
He has fallen enthroned with the brave in their glory, yet  
scorning to yield or to flee—  
But breathing no word of forgiveness and leaving no  
message for me.

“O desolate years !  
I am weary and stricken, and fain would I lay me at peace  
Where the roar of the noise of the world and its follies  
and vanities cease,  
Its hopes and its fears.  
Yet one thing remains to a spirit as saddened and hope-  
less as I,  
To seek the old home where my darling is sleeping and  
• look on her grave ere I die.”

PART III.

I.

Night has come ; o'er vale and mountain fast her sable  
robes are sweeping,  
Fainter wanes the dying sunlight ling'ring slow by  
shore and lea,  
Not a whisper mars the silence round the spot where she  
is sleeping  
Save the murmur of the breezes and the music of the  
sea.

*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 23*

With melodious sound and nearer beat the waves with  
ceaseless motion,  
Beat the waves in measured cadence falling on the rocky  
strand,  
And the low wind sighs responsive to the rhythm of the  
ocean  
Like the song of some sweet singer echoing thro' a  
dreary land.

All th' immeasurable ether gleams and glows with light  
supernal,  
Glitt'ring points of red and crystal, trembling bars of  
silver white,  
Watchfires where the armed angels guard the throne of  
the Eternal,  
Outposts of a host unnumbered, scattered through the  
Infinite.

'Tis the grave ; no urn of marble crowns the site with  
classic splendour,  
On the headstone gray and rugged hangs a single faded  
wreath,  
Wild flowers round it and above it—emblems of the pure  
and tender—  
None are half so sweet and spotless as the flower that  
lies beneath.

Here, where Peace on wings majestic rules the Night as  
her dominion,  
Watches with her shield of Silence at the grave beside  
the sod,  
Dreamlessly the child is sleeping 'neath the shadow of her  
pinion,  
Far from passion, toil, and sorrow ; near to Nature and  
to God.

24 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR*

"Tiny blossom that hath faded ere the summer's noon  
and beauty,  
Whom an angel's hand hast gathered in the sweetness  
of the Spring ;  
Little feet that have not learnt to tread the iron path of  
Duty,  
Have not felt the sword of Sorrow, or the bitter shames  
that sting.

"It is better thus, my darling ! Better than a dark to-  
morrow  
Where the fruits of Love and Pleasure turn to Passion  
and Despair,  
For the joy of Life is lesser than the burthen of its sorrow,  
And I would that God would lay me in the grave beside  
you there."

II.

"Deeper, wider grows the darkness o'er the forest softly  
stealing ;  
Shadowy trees as dim and gloomy as the shadows they  
have thrown  
Gird me round with walls Cimmerian as I weep in silence  
kneeling  
By the grave that holds within it all that I can call  
mine own.

"What is Life ? A changeful season—bright to-day and  
dark to-morrow ;  
Say not : 'Those who sow in anguish shall at last in  
gladness reap.'  
Rather say : 'The fruits of Folly shall be reaped in pain  
and sorrow'—  
Then, the voice that all must answer—and the last long  
dreamless sleep.

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*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 25*

“Hark! On pinions swift, untiring, sweeping southward,  
sweeping shoreward,  
Over continent and ocean comes the wild wind flying  
fast,  
Like a god he comes to conquer from his Kingdom in the  
Nor’ward,  
And a clarion voice is ringing—’Tis the spirit of the  
blast!

“Hark! Again that voice, resounding, swells and sinks  
in trembling motion,  
Ringing nearer, ringing clearer, like a sweet-toned silver  
bell,  
‘Magdalenè! Magdalenè!’ echoing shoreward from the  
ocean—  
’Tis my darling’s voice that calls me. ’Tis the voice I  
loved so well.

“Not a sound—the dark trees stir not. Am I waking?  
Am I dreaming?  
Silence in the shadowy forest, silence in the wilderness,  
But in arching blue above me crystal stars are coldly  
gleaming  
Like the eyes of those who judge me, cruel, stern, and  
pitiless.

“List! From utter darkness round me once again that  
song sonorous,  
As of those whose souls unfettered soar beyond these  
prison bars,  
Comes, with sound of rushing pinions, voices in celestial  
chorus,  
Mighty waves of deep-toned music rolling heavenwards  
to the stars.

26 *THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR.*

" 'Tis as tho' the skies were sundered and the starry hosts,  
    descending,  
    Bring the joy of the Immortal to a soul in dark despair,  
'Till I hear the mystic echo of those voices strangely  
    blending  
    Ling'ring in one trembling note, and dying on the  
    midnight air !

" But one clear voice dies not ever : over mountain, shore,  
    and hollow,  
    ' Magdalenè ! Magdalenè ! ' ever calling from the sea.  
'Tis my darling's voice that calls me, and with trembling  
    steps I follow  
    Wherso'er that voice shall lead me till it lead at last  
    to Thee."

III.

Mute she sped ; thro' lonely forests on her feeble foot-  
    steps bore her—  
    Weird ravines, dim haunted valleys, where the storm  
    sprites range and rave,  
Till the shelving hills dipt eastward, and she saw at last  
    before her,  
    Wide and far, a pall of darkness on the sleeping summer  
    wave.

Till by yellow sands and shingle, dim dark rocks, gaunt  
    cliffs and hoary,  
    Stood the woman pale and weeping, with sad heart and  
    weary feet,  
And the harvest moon arising smote the heavens with  
    sudden glory,  
    Trembled on the faint horizon where the sky and waters  
    meet,

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*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 27*

Clothed the misty deep beneath it with a weird and pallid  
splendour,  
Shot a ray of stainless silver 'thwart the wave from East  
to West,  
Cleft th' empurpled dusk asunder with a radiance white  
and slender,  
With a stream that flashed and trembled on the purple  
ocean's breast—

Which to weary eyes that watched it seemed a path to  
Realms Immortal,  
Seemed a path of light celestial that the angels might  
have trod,  
From the shores beyond the Dawning to the verge of  
Death's dark portal  
Leading from this vale of shadows to the Majesty of  
God.

Flash the vaulted heights with brilliance, myriad gems  
that gleam and quiver,  
And the ocean's shining bosom mirrors clear the  
jewelled dome!  
“Heaven above and heaven beneath me ; and beyond—  
the silver river—  
Still she calls me . . . ‘Magdalenè!’ . . . Darling  
—I am coming home.”

Then the clarion voice vibrated over ocean, shore, and  
hollow—  
“Magdalenè ! Magdalenè ”—ever calling from the sea ;  
And she answered, “I am ready. Onward ! Onward ! I  
will follow  
Wheresoe'er thy voice shall lead me till it lead at last  
to Thee.”

From her soul she felt the burden of her sorrow slip and  
 sever,  
 As the mists disperse and vanish, fading at the face of  
 Day ;  
 All the passion and the fever of the brain were gone for  
 ever—  
 All the fierce unrest and longing sank in peace and  
 passed away.

IV.

"I am bound by a power that is deathless, a yearning  
 divine  
 That draws my soul onward, resistless, my child, unto  
 thine,  
 That lifts my sad heart with a gladness unspoken to thee,  
 Thy voice from the sea.

"Lo! the shame and the shadow of sin that lay dark on  
 my breast  
 They have lifted and vanished as mists from the blue  
 mountain's crest  
 Thro' the silence of death, thro' the gloom and the glory  
 of Night,  
 I shall pass into light.

"Thy voice like the sound of sweet melody trembles and  
 falls,  
 Thy voice like the peal of the clarion thrills me and  
 calls—  
 Calls me to thee at the gates of High Heaven in the  
 Realms of the Blest—  
 And I pass to my rest."



*THE REPENTANCE OF MAGDALENÈ DESPAR. 29*

And as one who moves and gazes fixed and silent in her  
dreaming,  
With a step that did not falter and a heart that did not  
shrink,  
Like a goddess in the moonlight, with her fair hair round  
her gleaming,  
Passionless, erect, and stately, passed she, slowly, to the  
brink.

With her blue eyes wide and dreamy, golden locks around  
her clinging,  
Bride of Death and crowned with beauty fair as hers  
whose name she bore,  
Following onward, following ever, where that clarion  
voice was ringing,  
Down the calm and silver river passed she, silent, from  
the shore.

Deeper, deeper, grew the waters closing round her and  
above her,  
Dimmer grew the dusky shore-line fading faintly in the  
West,  
Till the purple star-flushed ocean clasped her to him like  
a lover,  
Drew her in his strong embrace, and hid her, sleeping,  
in his breast.

But the Night-breeze blowing shoreward bore a sound  
o'er vale and hollow,  
"Magdalenè! Magdalenè!" ever calling from the sea,  
And the trembling echo answered, "Onward! Onward!  
I will follow  
Wheresoe'er thy voice shall lead me till it lead at last  
to Thee."

## THE BLACK KNIGHT.


FIERCE were the feuds on the Borderland  
When the sword was Law in the days of old,  
When the world was ruled by the mailed hand,  
And the might to seize was the right to hold.

In the gory tracks of the War God's feet  
Rapine and Terror came following fast,  
As each slumbering town and peaceful street  
Awoke to the sound of the trumpet's blast.

*Then* the day was bright with the glint of arms ;  
*Then* the night was red with the fires that leapt  
From burning hamlets and wasted farms  
Where the ruthless floods of invasion swept.

From across the Tweed came the clansmen bold,  
And Northumberland's spearmen barred the way ;  
But an English Earl lay rigid and cold  
Ere the Borderers fled from that deadly fray.

Three years rolled onward, and Time had spread  
A mantle of peace by the Northern rills ;  
No trumpet's blast and no martial tread  
Woke the echoing voice of the slumb'ring hills.



On the armoury wall hung the tall war-shield,  
And the good sword rusted within its sheath,  
And the knights who charged on the battle-field  
Now followed the chase o'er the purple heath.

. . . . .

But again they come ! From across the Tweed  
Rush the lawless Borderers forth to war ;  
With gath'ring strength and with stealthy speed  
They march 'neath the light of the morning star,

Till the gleaming line of their battle-van  
By noonday breaks thro' the leafy wood,  
And the message speeds onward from man to man :  
"The castle is girt by the Northern brood !"

Then spreads a tumult of fierce surprise  
And swords are girded with stern intent  
As the creaking drawbridge upward flies  
And the archers rush to the battlement.

In the spacious hall of that castle gray  
Sat the widowed Countess whose noble lord  
Was slain in the arms of Victory  
Three summers since by a Northern sword.

Ah ! Too well she guessed as she heard the din  
The dire import of that echoing shout,  
The tramp of the armoured guard within  
And the rattle of shafts on the walls without.

As she sped from the hall to the ramparts high,  
Where the faithful ranks of her vassals stood,  
All hearts beat fast as she passed them by  
In the pride of her perfect womanhood.

Like a vision of beauty in dreamland born  
She stood in the midst of those mail-clad knights  
As a wild flower blooms in the bearded corn,  
Or a bright star gleams in the misty heights.  
But white was her cheek as the driven snow  
Ere its mantle covers the Autumn leaves,  
And her dark eyes shone with feverish glow  
As she glanced t'wards the Northern helms and greaves.  
Then she spake to the Chief of that silent band,  
Who stood sternly watching the moving foe,  
While the good swords shone in each knight's right hand,  
And the shaft on the string of each archer's bow :  
" Speak ! Where is the boy ? " Not a voice replied ;  
Not a warrior stirred ; but from face to face  
There flashed the dread which they could not hide—  
*" In the ruthless hands of that hated race ! "*

. . . . .  
" I come from the Chiefs who have crossed the Tweed,  
And I speak in the words which they spake to me,  
Yield the castle up : drop the bridge with speed,  
Or the boy shall swing on the nearest tree."

Then answered Humont of Chillingham Keep  
(The dead Earl's brother), and roundly swore,  
Till the castle walls were a ruined heap  
To fight for the monarch whose badge he wore.

A more fearless heart on a battle plain  
Beat not in Britain or north of the Tweed,  
But his mind was made of a warlike grain,  
And his faith was the faith of the Spartan Creed.

" Go hence, Sir Herald, to whence ye came,  
And tell the Chiefs of yon Northern horde  
That they who dare offer such terms of shame  
Shall find reply at the point of the sword ;

And if but one hair of the young child's head  
Be harmed by them—then for every hair  
A Northumbrian blade shall gleam blood-red,  
When Humont of Chillingham storms their lair."

Then the Countess, turning her troubled eyes,  
Spake with trembling lips, and with gesture wild ;  
" Will ye stand and look while my darling dies ?  
I love my king, but—O, my child ! my child ! "

But they looked at the forest of spears which shone  
On the plain beneath, and their bold hearts fell  
At such terrible odds. Oh ! was there none  
Who would save the boy whom she loved so well ?

There was one ! He had loved with a hopeless love,  
Had loved her as maid, and widow, and wife,  
With a faith as pure as the stars above,  
The one pure faith of a sinful life.  
For his youth had been wild, and his hands were red  
With the blood of crime, and the fearful fame  
Of his prowess and lawless deeds had spread  
Till the Border rang with his hated name—  
The Black Knight, Conrad, whose sword and plume  
When far in the battle they gleamed and tossed  
On the field where the brave Earl met his doom  
Had turned the tide when the day seemed lost.  
Dark was that plume as the raven's wing,  
Black was his armour from head to heel,  
And the two-edged sword none but he could swing  
Was wrought and fashioned of bluest steel.  
His face was pale, but it was not fear  
That had blanched the bronze on his rugged cheek,  
But a passion that told in a single tear  
The depth of a thought which he could not speak,


From its sable sheath leapt his shining sword ;  
By the cross of its hilt and by Holy Rood  
He swore he would wrest from that savage horde  
The only joy of her widowhood.

Then he looked at the faces that burnt with shame ;  
And the hosts of the North he gazed upon ;  
And he said, as his colour went and came :  
" They have slain the sire ; shall they slay the son ? "

The Countess heard ; and her heart was sore  
With mingled sorrow and joy and pride  
As she thought of the love she had scorned before  
And the faith of a heart she had cast aside.  
She strove to speak, but she strove in vain ;  
She strove to move, but her limbs seemed stone ;  
And her bosom heaved like the troubled main  
When its surface is ruffled and tempest-blown.  
And the passion that swelled in her tender breast  
Had made her face like the face of the dead  
As her hand to his bearded lips he prest  
And passed from her sight with a steady tread.

Then the Black Knight turned and with steady hand  
Filled the crystal goblet and raised it high  
Till it glittered and flashed like a shining brand  
In the mellow light, as he made reply :

" Thro' the lists of Life rides an Unseen Knight  
On a phantom steed from the Realms of Gloom,  
And he challenges all to stand and fight  
Ere they pass thro' the gates of the silent Tomb.  
What matters it then, since we all must fall  
At the fatal thrust of his viewless spear,  
If I meet him now 'neath the castle wall  
For the sake of the boy whom she holds so dear ?



I have charged ere now at the bristling banks  
Of a steel-blue line when all hope seemed wild ;  
I will tilt with Death in the Northern ranks  
For the pure young life of this fair-haired child.  
Fill the goblet up with the blood-red wine,  
Be it Life ! be it Death ! we are comrades true,  
Drink thou to my sword in the battle-line !  
I will pledge the sweet face which I leave with you ! ”

With the drawbridge down, and the postern wide,  
And a steady grip on the bridle-rein—  
One touch of the spur to the stallion's side,  
And he shot like a bolt for the open plain.  
With his visor barred, and his broadsword freed,  
And his black plume tossed in the wind's strong breath,  
When the long low strides of the gallant steed  
Beat stronger, faster, he rode to his death.  
Breathless they watched from the plain—from the gate,  
Both friends and foemen struck dumb to see  
One warrior charging fearless and straight  
The deep ranks of the Northern chivalry.  
From the plain—from the gate—from the castle roofs  
No sound was borne on the balmy gale  
Save the echoing thud of galloping hoofs  
And the clank of the rider's sable mail.  
He crashed thro' the ranks of that armoured band  
Ere a sword was drawn or a shaft had sped,  
Till he reached the tree where a cruel hand  
Had just swung the boy to a branch o'erhead.  
One circling flash of the shining blade  
And the cord was cut and the boy was free—  
One strong bold reach with his arms he made,  
And the child sat firm on his saddle-tree.  
Then broke the thunder of falling blows,  
As they rained like hail on his sable gear ;

And the gleam of his sword as it fell and rose,  
And the ring of his war-cry proudly clear.  
And louder and louder the tumult roared,  
And brighter and brighter fresh steel flashed forth,  
As high in the midst of that savage horde  
His dark plume waved o'er the crests of the North.  
And swift was the hiss of his Southern sword  
As it swung like a reed in his strong right hand,  
And short was the shrift of each warlike lord,  
If it beat down the guard of his Northern brand.  
Beneath the shade of his tall black shield  
He covered the boy on his saddle bow,  
And the strength of a nature that could not yield  
Gave nerve to his arm and illumined his brow.  
But the odds were long and the strife was sore,  
And thrice in the conflict they saw him reel,  
And thrice the crest that ne'er bent before  
Was lost to their sight in that sea of steel.  
But ever it rose ! At his terrible tilt  
The Borderers shrank till his broadsword good,  
Erst blue as the river, from point to hilt  
Was crimson and dripping with Northern blood.  
Quoth the seneschal on the castle wall ;  
"No blade in Britain this day could stand  
'Gainst such frightful odds. The boy must fall  
With the bravest heart in our native land."  
But, maddened to frenzy, he charged again ;  
The black steed sprang to the spurred heel ;  
He thrust to the heart and he clove to the brain  
Wherever he struck, as he cleared a lane.  
To the right, to left, the Borderers reel  
At the terrible sweep of that dripping steel.  
And the weight and strength of the brave black steed  
And the cut and thrust that was sure and straight  
Broke through their ranks, and at headlong speed  
He raced once more for the castle gate.




But she who watched from the battlement  
Had seen with growing terror, and wild,  
That his gear was stained and his armour bent,  
And he swayed in his seat as he held the child.  
Till his face grew white with a sudden pain  
As he fell to the ground with a hollow groan,  
And the maddened steed with a trailing rein  
Bore the child to the castle gate alone.  
Then strong as the tide of the torrent sets  
Was the rush of the North on its helpless prey ;  
But the hurtling hail from the parapets  
Guarded the ground where the Black Knight lay.  
While the cross-bow shafts were as deadly rain  
They bore him in whom no fear could quell,  
And the clank' of the bridge as it rose again  
Smote on their hearts like a funeral knell.  
All bruised and bleeding they bore him in,  
And they knew as they bore him that ne'er again  
Would his broadsword clash in the steel-rung din,  
Or his war-cry float o'er the battle plain.

. . . . .

The pure white flame of a deathless love  
Burnt in his soul, and his brow grew bright  
With a radiance that seemed to the eyes above  
Like a faint reflex of celestial light,  
Till the waves of passion lashed high and broke  
Over his soul in a stemless tide,  
And rushed to the cold blue lips and spoke  
With the strength of a love which he could not hide :

"I have loved the clash of the ringing steel  
When it gleams blood-red in the mailed hand,  
And the crash of the charge when the riders reel,  
And the short sharp tones of the stern command ;

The brunt of the battle—when deadlocks hold  
The steeds and the riders in grappling vice,  
Where the hate is bitter, and hearts are bold,  
And a faulty thrust is not given twice.  
I have loved the bay of the deep-mouthed hound,  
And the mellow swell of the bugle horn,  
When the short green sward was a jewelled ground  
With the diamond dew of the early morn.  
I have done with the chase and the martial strife,  
And I crave them not, for thy dark eye saith  
That the love which I could not win in life  
Shall be mine for ever, my love, in death.  
Bend down thy dark and sorrowful eyes  
Till the burning rays of their light illumine  
The vapours of Death, and the mysteries  
Of the path which lies thro' the gates of gloom.  
O clasp me still closer to thee, and lay  
My sinking head on thy trembling breast !  
I had prayed to fall where the broadswords play,  
But to breathe my last in thine arms is best.  
With the blood of crime has my hand been stained ;  
My faults are many, and virtues few,  
But one light that never wavered or waned  
Was the guiding star of my love for you.  
And it may be yet in that Unknown Land,  
Where my soul, ere long, shall have entered in,  
That a true deed done by a strong right hand  
May balance the weight of a life of sin.  
My heart throbs slow with a tremulous beat,  
The words I would utter sound faint and low ;  
But the touch of your warm red lips is sweet,  
And whisper you love me before I go.  
I have played my part in the world of strife,  
And why should I linger for lesser bliss ?  
Ah ! what now are the years of a misspent life  
To one single hour of a death like this ? ”



JOHN RAE BURN.

I.

"DEAD ! Who says she is dead ? . . . I hold his letter  
before mine eyes.

Gone from the Valley of Shadows to the light of ineffable  
skies !

He writes 'She is dead,' and I know of no cause to  
suspect that he lies.

"He writes 'She is dead !' and the light of a hope that  
I dreamt would not die  
Has flickered and waned into darkness and left but the  
pitiful cry :

'God gathers the flowers that are purest and best and  
thou shalt not ask why.'

"Not dead ! for the soul is immortal. She lives where  
these eyes cannot see,  
And I sit here alone in the silence, and commune,  
O Sorrow, with Thee.

But living or dead, till I cease to be, she can never, never  
be dead to me.

"Who shall write with a fearless hand the secret  
thoughts of his inmost soul ?—

Bare his thoughts to the common gaze like written  
words on an open scroll ?—

Tell of the fever of passionate love that none can  
conquer and few control ?

"Who shall judge by the outward man what the inner  
life of that man may be?—

Judge of the currents that dart beneath by the placid  
breast of the sleeping sea?—

Read the truth of the things we see not by the light of  
the things we see?

"Sweet yet sad seem the days long gone when Youth  
looked round on the world and said :

'See how the garden of Life is garnished with lilies  
white and with roses red.'

Ne'er a thought of the autumn winds when leaves are  
scattered and flowers are dead.

"Years have rolled, but it seems not so, since first I came  
from the mother-land,

Since the day I wandered down by the sea and heard the  
waves beat loud on the sand.

Who shall say the trifles of Life are not the work of an  
Unseen Hand?

"The Unseen Hand of a changeless Fate that bends our  
souls to a Higher Will,

That gathers lives from North and South for the destiny  
they must each fulfil,

From Life, thro' Death, to that Unknown Land—the  
goal and zenith of good or ill.

"Ah! Trifles in Life, tho' we heed them not, are  
stoutest links in the brittle chain.

We heed them not, but they bind us fast, with a clasp we  
can never break again,

Their silken weft has the strength of steel, tried in sorrow  
and proved in pain.

" Hers was fair as an angel's face in its passionless calm  
and its sweet repose,  
And I stood and watched the gentle heave of her tender  
breast as it fell and rose  
Like lazy waves on a summer sea when winds are dying  
and silence grows.

" She had fallen asleep on the yellow sand where the  
sunshine played with her golden hair,  
And the heavy fringe of her eyelids drooped on a cheek  
as pure as the lilies fair,  
And over all hung the shadow of Peace and the scent  
of the sea-weed everywhere.

" Why tell the tale that was never new since man's first  
love to the world was told ?  
The songs which the poets sing to-day are but the songs  
which they sang of old,  
Yet the theme will live in its deathless bloom when  
hands are withered and hearts are cold.

" We dreamt in those days of a faith too deep, of Love  
made stronger than Death can be,  
And our souls were filled with a passionate fire that  
surged and swelled like a southern sea ;  
Tho' bitter the hour of our parting proved, she  
whispered, ' My soul is given to thee ! '

" Far out West, where the breath of the wind is as the  
blast from a furnace mouth,  
I made my home in the wilderness, in the land of fever  
and fiery drouth ;  
But my soul was hers and it lingers still by the breezy  
shore of the pleasant South.

"I have borne the damp of the chill morass and the  
burning heat of the tropic day,  
Five years have I toiled for the woman I love with a faith  
that Time shall ne'er decay,  
Fortune has smiled on my strong right hand ; but all  
that I care for has passed away.


"Too late I learn all her heart concealed. 'Too late ! too  
late !' the Echo saith.  
Her letters ceased as her hand grew weak, and fainter and  
fainter her parting breath.  
The beauty she wore as a royal robe, alas ! was the fatal  
beauty of Death.

"She is gone ! with her heavenly face and the voice that  
rang out over the sea ;  
And I sit here alone in the silence and commune,  
O Sorrow, with Thee.  
But, living or dead, till I cease to be she can never, never  
be dead to me."

## II.

"Three years since she died ! and Time has calmed the  
first wild fever of grief and pain,  
The wound has partly healed, tho' I deemed such  
sorrow could never find peace again,  
For the sword struck deep to mine inmost soul, and the  
scar will ever remain.

"Do I love her less in these days ? Not so, for her  
memory still is a sacred thing ;  
Often methinks I hear her voice in the mystic chants  
that the wild winds sing  
When they sigh thro' the forest and over the plain  
like the moan of a spirit wandering.



"Times have changed, for the tide of Progress, rolling  
westward, has reached me here ;  
I have crept from my shell, and mixed with men, and  
grown more kindly and less austere ;  
Can it be that the spell of the buried Past is slowly  
lessening year by year ?

"Few are the friends I can call my own, but one have  
I found out here in the West,  
And a truer nobler heart than his never beat in a human  
breast ;  
Our stations join and my happiest hours are spent with  
him as a welcome guest.

"A gaunt old man with a kingly face and a daughter  
fresh as an English May ;  
Like summer and winter they seem to me—the dark  
brown locks and the silver gray.  
Let me search my soul—Is it friendship alone that draws  
my steps so oft that way ?

"Brown-eyed Edith—a child of Nature—free as the air  
of her native strand ;  
There are few as fair, there are none more true, none  
gentler, none sweeter in all the land ;  
But she lacks the grace, the imperial ease, of her I found  
asleep on the sand.

"Child ! if Love should come thy way and whisper low  
with his rosebud mouth—  
Breathe on thy soul with the fire of his breath as fierce  
and strong as the wind of the Drouth—  
Ah ! thou wilt love with the passionate love that is born  
of the sun and the South !

"Am I false in my thoughts to her who said, soft in my ear, 'All my soul is thine !'  
False ! whilst I see, thro' the haze of the past, the deathless eyes of my Margaret shine—  
My dead love's eyes as I saw them last, lit with the light of a love divine ?

"Have I grown vain with the rolling years ? or have I read her secret aright ?  
Why has she grown so silent and strange ? Why were there tears in her eyes last night ?  
Can it be *love* that flushes her cheek, then turns its damask to deadly white ?

"Can it be true that Edith loves—loves with a passion as fierce and free  
As that which shook the strength of my youth, years ago, by the sunny sea ?  
Have I pierced to the depths of her soul and read that she loves—*loves me* ?

"Ah ! I am sick of this lonely life ; faint with the stress of these weary days.  
I am growing gray in the wilderness ; quaint, old-fashioned, in all my ways.  
Can it be there is happiness yet hidden deep 'neath the shadowy haze ?

"Can I go to her now, look in her eyes, fearlessly take her hand in mine ?  
And say those words which I said but once, 'O my love, all my soul is thine !'  
Hypocrite ! No ; for the eyes of the Dead gaze on this life from the Life Divine !"



## III.

“Married ! Is it the hand of Fate ? Edith and I are married at last !

Two quiet years of wedded life and I still clasp my sorrowful secret fast.

I have steeled my heart, I have said to my soul, ‘It is time to bury the Past.’

“Do I give to her as honest a love as the faithful homage she pays to me ?

She is all that is womanly, tender, and true ; she is all that a wife should be.

Trustful heart, couldst thou read my thoughts how would thy husband appear to thee ?

“Two years have flown since we stood together, sad and silent, the night he died—

Stood by his couch and watched his life ebbing away like a falling tide.

Friend ! Thou hast passed thro’ the River of Death : is there joy and peace on the farther side ?

“He whispered softly,—I scarce could hear—he placed her delicate hand in mine,

‘Raeburn,’ he said, with his dying breath, ‘guard her, love her, this trust is thine !

Take my wildflower unto thy heart. Thou art the oak and she is the vine.’

“Poor child ! Poor child, with her passionate heart ! Bitter and wild were the tears she shed.

I folded her trembling form to my breast, tender and few were the words I said.

In that darksome room our troth was plighted—hers and mine—alone with the dead.


"I stood with her at the altar of God, I swore the vow  
and I bent the knee,  
But I heard a voice that she could not hear, and I saw  
a face that she could not see ;  
For Memory rose from the Shadowy Past and stood like  
a spectre over me.

"Am I to waste my life in dreams till Death shall me in  
his arms enfold ?  
Better to turn to the new love glowing than muse in  
silence over the old,  
Better to bury my hopeless grief deep in the grave where  
her heart lies cold !

"Lo ! I will cast off, for ever and ever, all that has held  
my spirit in thrall.  
I will taste of the wine and honey of life ; I have lived  
too long on the wormwood and gall.  
I have done with the Past. I have severed the chain.  
I will turn to Edith as all in all.

"Margaret ! hear—if the dead can hear the sighs of our  
souls in that Life above—  
Where thou standest—an angel of God—beneath the  
wings of His brooding Dove !  
Shall I not cleave to this womanly heart ? Have I not  
vowed to cherish and love ?

"Passionate love will last for a season, wither the heart  
and weary the breast ;  
Is the prize for which we have striven worth all the fever  
of fierce unrest ?  
Love that flows like a summer river, musical, passionless,  
is the best.



"Time the Merciful, Time the Healer, who takest the  
sting of our sorrows away  
And calmest all the unsatisfied longing, surely thou sayest  
to all to-day :  
'Brood no more on the things that have perished, grasp  
your happiness while you may.'

"Truth sits enthroned on her pure white brow, and  
Honour shines in her clear brown eyes ;  
What tho' she hide the depth of her love beneath the  
mask of a sober guise,  
Is not the faith of a heart like hers more sweet than all  
passionate memories ? "

## IV.

"The Morn has come in his glorious sheen of royal  
crimson and silver-gray,  
And the wings of Night are spread for flight before the  
shield of the armed Day,  
And the face of the Earth is lit with joy and the hills are  
flushed with a roseate ray.

"For he comes like a lover whom Fate has held far away  
from his loved one's side,  
And his eyes are keen with the fire of his thoughts and  
the fever of longings unsatisfied ;  
He comes in the passion and pride of his strength to clasp  
the Earth as a bride.

"Fresh and blithe is the morning air, the dew still  
glitters on grass and tree ;  
And the mystic spell of the wilderness, the charm of the  
Bush, creeps over me.  
There are times when a man can say to his soul : 'It is  
happiness only *to be !*'

"There is peace around, there is peace in my heart, as I  
drive alone thro' the silent land,  
And mark once more that the Drouth is o'er and Nature,  
stretching a gracious hand,  
Hath changed bare plains into pastures green as tho' by  
the wave of a fairy's wand.


"There is peace in my heart, and a sense of joy thrills my  
being and fills my breast ;  
After the grief and tension of passion Happiness comes as  
a welcome guest ;  
After the turmoil of weary years God has given me quiet  
and rest.

"Ah ! What is that yonder ? I know those horses—the  
blue-roan colts that I sold to Gray !  
The Dalmora buggy, with the old man and Walter !  
What can be bringing them down to-day ?  
They seem in trouble—two traces broken—and the wheels  
gone down in that bed of clay.

"'I'm afraid that I shall not be able to help you. I can  
give you this cord to splice up the gear.  
It only requires a little patience and those two colts will  
soon pull you clear.  
Yes. I must hurry on to the Five-mile. Caxton, of  
Woodside, is coming here.

"'What did you say ? You are going there also ? Some  
one expecting—waiting—for you ?  
A governess coming up from the South ? She will find  
this Western life something new.  
I will tell her, then, from you if I see her that you will be  
there in an hour or two.'

. . . . .



"Caxton not come? Without writing to tell me? Well!  
I will trust in his promise no more.  
Where can this governess be whom they spoke of? I can  
see some one there thro' the open door.  
I suppose I had better go in and explain the reason why  
Gray was not here before."

v.

"I enter the room of the little inn—some one is standing  
over there,  
Her face in the shadow, half turned away. I can only see  
she is tall and fair,  
For the room seems dark as I pass within, and my eyes  
are dazed by the noontide glare.

"Something familiar about the face! Calmly she moves  
out into the light.  
Why does she suddenly tremble and start? Why does  
her cheek turn deadly white?  
We stand and gaze in each other's eyes, and a mist arises  
before my sight.

"We stand and gaze, but we do not speak, for the shadow  
of Fate hangs overhead,  
And I see once more those deep sad eyes, and the graceful  
curve of that stately head.  
Has she risen again in the beauty of old?—'Mine own  
true love!—Not dead!—Not dead!'

"She has come to me thro' the gates of Death, and her  
eyes are wet with the angels' tears;  
And Heaven shall mourn—there are none more pure in  
all the throng of her starry peers.  
She has loved with the strength of a deathless love thro'  
all the grief of the bitter years.


" Ah ! I forget those weary years, the sword of Sorrow,  
the secret pain,  
I only know that I clasp her now—mine own true love—  
in these arms again.  
' O Queen of my soul ! Lift up thine eyes ! Who but  
thee in my heart could reign ? '

" She pillows her golden head on my breast, she lifts up  
her radiant eyes to mine,  
And I feel the sense of their mystic power mount thro'  
my brain like the fumes of wine.  
They have not changed. They are still the same. Lit  
with the light of a love divine.

" It is all a dream that we parted, love. We are sitting  
again on the yellow sand ;  
We hear the boom of the bursting surf ; we see the white  
foam flung on the strand.  
It is all a dream that we parted, love. Who was it spoke  
of the Western land ?

. . . . .  
" What do I say ? No dream ! No dream, but the iron  
hand 'neath the velvet glove—  
The iron Hand of that Destiny decreed by the Unseen  
Powers above ! . . .  
If loyal to Love, disloyal to Honour—untrue to all I have  
sworn to love !

" Deep and wide is the gulf that parts us. All my gain  
shall but end in loss.  
Thou and I on opposite banks must watch the waters eddy  
and toss !  
Thou and I on opposite banks—but we may not cross—  
but we may not cross !



"Who shall comfort the comfortless, breathe peace to  
the heart that is desolate?  
Sin to covet forbidden fruit! and sin to strive 'gainst the  
hand of Fate!  
Given me back from the mouth of the grave——given  
me back—Too late—Too late!

"She has told me all. I can see the truth. 'Tis written  
with fire on my heart and brain.  
Our letters passed thro' a villain's hands. He sold his  
honour her love to gain.  
He said 'He is dead,' and he wrote me a lie. We believed,  
and we never wrote again.

"He loved her then? Was this the friendship he swore  
to me in the days that were?  
I would give the years I have yet to live only to see him  
standing there,  
To meet him alone——Be his strength what it may, I am  
armed with the strength of mine own despair.

"We two alone where no ear could hear! We two alone  
where no eye could see!  
Mercy! Yea, I would mete to him the mercy he rendered  
to mine and me.  
I would shoot him there like a dog where he stood, tho' I  
passed with him to Eternity."

## VI.

"Going to Dalmora! *She*, the new governess! *She*!  
with her beauty of mind and face,  
Waiting there where the coach had left her. Why was  
she not met at the place?  
Ah! I remember. To think that our meeting was brought  
about by a broken trace!

"Trifles ! This is how Fate impending works great issues  
from little things,  
A random blow on a wound half healed, and Hope falls  
stricken with trailing wings.  
Trifles ! a careless stroke of the pick may strike the gold,  
or the hidden springs.

. . . . .

"Now, I am calm. I stand once more encased in mine  
armour of self-control.  
Could I stem the rush of the pent-up passion surging as  
waves of the Tempest roll ?  
When all things else were as things forgotten, and each  
sought each with the eyes of the soul !

"Back to the station ! In these few hours how all the  
current of life has changed,  
Flowing again in the old old channels, the hills and  
valleys where once it ranged.  
Back to the station ! Back to Edith, with courage failing  
and faith estranged !

"To live so close—scarce twenty miles—and all our meet-  
ings but grief and pain.  
So near, yet so far—parted for ever. Did she not say,  
'We have severed the chain ;  
The Past is buried ; the book is closed, *never*, friend, to  
be opened again ' ?

"Back to the station ! to take up once more the quiet  
routine of daily life.  
How can I look with a fearless gaze into the faithful eyes  
of my wife,  
The truest, tenderest wife on earth, who shall never know  
of this inward strife ? "

. . . . .



## VII.

"Am I so weak that I cannot say, 'I will be true what-soe'er betide,  
True in action and true in thought'? Have I no honour,  
no manly pride?"

Yes. I will honour and love to the last the woman whose  
place must be at my side.

"Ah! but Love is not governed by Will. Love has no  
law. 'Tis unfettered and free.

Canst thou stand on the yellow sand and curb the tide of  
the rising sea? . . .

. . . Get thee behind me, Satan, for ever. . . . Tempt  
me no more in my misery.

"Edith and she are the closest friends. She has ridden  
down to Dalmora to-day.

She likes her better than any one else. 'We must have  
the new governess over to stay,

So sweet and so sad. Such a beautiful face.' I answer  
and laugh in a careless way.

"She has come to my home, she is under my roof. My  
heart beats fast as I touch her glove!

Grown so fragile she seemeth to me like an angel sent  
from the Heavens above.

I see them yonder standing together—my wife and the  
woman I love.

"No! Not love! I have crushed the memory. Edith,  
alone, until Time shall end.

I, too, can turn from fruit forbidden; I, too, can accept  
what Fate may send.

'The Past is buried; the book is closed, never again to  
be opened, friend!'"

## VIII.

"It is better to die, better to sleep, to lay down one's  
burden and be at rest,  
To cast off for ever the shackles of sorrow, the passions  
and sins of a troubled breast,  
To cross the bounds of the darksome river. Death is not  
terrible. Death is best.

"I am spent with the struggle that rends my spirit and  
leaves me far from the wished-for goal—  
Faint with the effort to curb and weaken the strength of  
the passions I cannot control,  
Whilst Love and Honour like mailed knights contend for  
the prize of my soul.

"Why should I strive to deceive myself? Sophist! thy  
platitudes are but vain!  
Turn as thou wilt from the days that were, truth will  
triumph and truth will reign.  
No! Thou canst *never* bury the past. No! Thou canst  
*never* unrivet the chain.

"Then it were wiser to seek a haven where Memory's  
echoes no more shall mock,  
Wiser to grasp the buckler and halberd and close with  
Death in a mortal shock!  
The Coward's refuge!—I will not seek it— The Rae-  
burns come of a different stock!"

Here the diary ends; for the hand that had written, wrote  
no more on the page of Time.

It is only the tale of two ruined lives; and one has passed  
to a happier clime—

Passed from the feverish dreams of Earth to the widening  
vistas of Life sublime.

## IX.

They found him lying—a shattered wreck—'neath splintered  
woodwork and broken wheel,  
And his face was pale as the face of one on whom Death's  
Angel has set his seal,  
But life still throbbed in the sinking frame, in the flaccid  
muscles once strong as steel.

“Bend closer, Edith. Don't cry, my darling !—Death  
must come to us all some day—  
Who will guard you and who will keep you now that I  
am going away ?  
Closer, Edith—— I am growing fainter—— There is  
something yet that I wish to say.

“There is a book—a diary,—— Burn it !—Some things  
are better lost in the grave !  
Promise me you will never read it. I have tried to be  
true—— I have tried to be brave——  
Have I failed in my duty to you, my darling ?—— Have  
I failed to fulfil the trust he gave ?

“Ah ! but who is that standing there ?—— Have you  
brought her to see me before I die ?——  
Kiss me, Edith—— The shadows deepen——the light  
has faded out of the sky——  
Margaret—give me your hand again—— The Past is  
buried—Good-bye—— Good-bye !” . . .

Two women are sitting, side by side ; they watch the  
shadows that play on the wall,  
And the darkness is creeping up from the East to cover  
the Earth like a funeral pall ;  
No voice is heard by the listening air and the silence of  
Death broods over it all.

Deep are the thoughts in the heart of each—thoughts  
which they feel yet never shall say ;  
Hand in hand they sit in the silence till Dawn has come  
in his mantle of gray ;  
But they know that their souls are bound together by the  
strength of a bond that will not decay.


. . . . .  
He has fallen asleep, he is buried deep in his lonely grave  
'neath the Western sod ;  
He will tread no more on that Unknown Shore the path  
of Sorrow his feet have trod ;  
He has passed to the realms of Eternal Peace "where they  
are as the Angels of God."

## AN ECHO.

In the harmony of ages floating from the dreamy Past,  
In the old romantic legends where the seeds of song were  
cast,  
In the pleasant fields of Fancy, whence the flowers of  
genius sprung,  
Can we find a path untrodden? Can we find a song  
unsung?  
Lamps of Genius burning brightly thro' the mists of  
bygone days,  
With the light of strong endeavour ever mingling with  
their rays;  
Dreams of dreamers, chants of singers made immortal in  
their song,  
With a soft and tender cadence, or a passion fierce and  
strong,  
Like the chimes from distant belfries, like the restless  
winds that blow  
Northwards with tempestuous fury, southwards musically  
slow;  
Like the thunderous roar of breakers bursting on a rocky  
strand,  
Or the rhythm of the river murmuring softly thro' the  
land;  
Sinking, rising, soaring upwards sound their melodies  
sublime—  
Sound the Voices of the Ages echoing thro' the Halls of  
Time.

What is left us ? Shall we wander midst the fields their  
feet have prest ?  
Sing again the songs they sang us in their passion of  
unrest ?  
Sing of Nature, 'neath whose influence all the poet's  
instinct stirs—  
Feels the throbbing of his pulses beat in unison with  
hers ;  
When the Dawn's grey veil of vapour falls before the  
face of Day,  
And the arrows of the sunshine chase the shadowy night  
away ;  
Like a goddess in her splendour, robed with many a  
roseate hue,  
In the mantle of the morning, jewelled with the glittering  
dew ?  
Softer is the calm of sunset, mellow light on plain  
and tree,  
Placid purple clouds, like islands floating in a golden sea,  
When the crimson-tinted sunlight sinks and pales in  
waning rays,  
And like rush of many waters, come the thoughts of  
other days ;  
Till the creeping mists grow deeper and the evening air  
is still  
With the awe of solemn shadows hanging darkly on the  
hill ;  
Till with wide and rapid pinions sweeps the Spirit of the  
Night,  
And our thoughts are carried onwards in the current of  
its flight,  
Through the wreathing mists of darkness where the mid-  
night reigns alone  
From the regions of the Finite to the bars of the Un-  
known.


. . . . .



All our songs are but the echoes of the chants long  
heard before,  
All our loves and our ambitions like the wave-beats on  
the shore,  
Coming, going, passing, ending with their restless hopes  
and fears,  
Till at last in silence buried in the cenotaph of years.

### EVENING : A FRAGMENT.

THIS is the hour of Rest ! Nature doth sleep,  
Draped in the shadowy garments of the night,  
And from the vast immeasurable height,  
The stars of Heaven their silent vigils keep,  
The emblems of Eternity. They stand,  
God's sentinels, without the gates of Heaven.  
This is the hour of Peace ! There is no sound.  
The fitful voices of the wandering winds  
Have died in hollow murmurs. Near and far  
Upon the sleeping Earth, beneath, around ;  
Descends the mantle of a deeper calm.  
It is the Spirit of the Night that speaks—  
“ A still, small voice ”—but with a magic power  
It sinks into the heart, till the wild wars  
Of earthly passions and corroding cares  
Disperse like clouds before the rising sun.  
This is the hour of Thought ! In this still hour  
The nature we inherit from High God,  
In conflict with our baser attributes,  
Rises triumphant, bidding us prepare  
For holier thoughts and higher destinies.  
O Man ! If thou wouldst gauge thy littleness,  
And know thine impotency, go behold  
The stars of Heaven ! For if thy mind conceives,  
And counts them held by beings such as we,  
With hopes, ambitions, loves, akin to ours,  
In what proportion dost thou find thyself





To the united millions of all worlds ?  
One single grain in miles of desert sand,  
One single drop in oceans wide and deep—  
Such is the import and significance  
Of thy small life ! For if such globes are ruled  
By the same laws this earthly world obeys,  
If Death has entered other spheres than ours,  
Where unknown myriads have been born and died,  
As we must live and die and be forgot,  
Then Man's imagination cannot grasp  
Nor hold such totals of immensity !  
Such things are hid, nor can we raise the veil ;  
Such thoughts will rise, nor can we bid them stay,  
But on quick wings they bear us unawares  
To vaster problems than Man's mind can solve.

## ODE ON THE JUBILEE.

O QUEEN, the shadow of whose throne  
O'er half the world is cast ;  
Thy people's glory is thine own,  
Their love for thee shall last.  
Empress of Nations ! Wide and far  
'Neath Southern Cross and Northern Star  
Thy sons are gath'ring fast  
To pay thee homage who hast been  
For half a century a Queen.

Behold how strong that throne may be  
Whose firm foundation stands,  
Not on a despot's tyranny  
Nor strength of armed bands,  
But on a People's love and trust  
Of her whose reign is good and just !  
Love, which the Ocean spans,  
Hath bound our fealty to her throne,  
Whose joys and sorrows are our own.

Not less a Queen we deemed her when  
The God of Love drew near ;  
And she—a ruler over men—  
Bent down a listening ear ;  
The robes of Empire could not hide  
The beating heart of England's bride,  
Nor make her choice less dear ;  
Her bridal wreath and bridal gems  
Seemed more to her than diadems.

And now in zenith of her sway  
She sits upon the throne !  
The glory of that bridal day  
Is gone : she reigns alone !  
Ah ! Who shall read the thoughts which pass—  
Like creeping shadows o'er the grass,  
When noon to eve has grown,—  
Within her heart, and bring again  
The Past with all its shadowy train !


Forget not, ye whose hearts are keen  
To pay the homage due,  
Altho' an Empress and a Queen  
She is a *woman* too ;  
And womanlike her thoughts will turn  
From pomp and state she may not spurn  
But bears with calmness through,  
To those she lost who cannot see  
The glory of her Jubilee.

God save her ! Hardly can be found  
A life more fair and pure ;  
The love of millions guard her round  
And make her throne secure !  
The power of noble womanhood  
That bore the grief and chose the good  
Shall make her name endure.  
A life and reign so nobly spent,  
Will be her stateliest monument.

## ALONE.

THE purple hills rise far behind,  
Before me spreads the plain,  
The tall grass shakes beneath the wind  
Like surges on the main.  
Thin mists have girt each low hill's crest,  
The hot sun swims in cloudless blue,  
A mirage gathers in the West  
And trembles into view :  
It gathers in the swimming haze,  
A silver lake of dazzling sheen,  
Its waves are bright with dancing light  
And tender tints of blue and green.  
A phantom sea, calm, limpid, wide,  
Sailed o'er by phantom ships !  
Ah ! well I know that rippling tide  
Could never cool my lips.  
My tongue is swollen in my mouth,  
My fevered lips are cracked and dry,  
I hear the Spirit of the Drouth  
Whisper : "Thou soon shalt die !"  
The living shadow of a man,  
The living shadow of a horse,  
Thro' heat and glare, in grim despair,  
We stagger on our unknown course.

Comrades, whose worth was sternly tried  
In hunger, thirst, and pain,  
I ne'er shall see you at my side,  
Nor clasp your hands again !



Mine own weak hands scarce feel the reins,  
The hot wind burns my withered cheek,  
So calm, so awful are the plains  
The silence seems to speak.  
It almost seems to speak and say :  
"Those wronged by thee demand redress,  
The hour draws nigh when thou shalt die,  
Alone within the wilderness !"  
Thro' shimmering grasses on I ride  
Across the yellow plain.  
My comrades one by one have died,  
And I alone remain.  
They sickened one by one, and died,  
The stout of heart, the strong of hand ;  
Some lie upon the dark hillside,  
And some upon the sand.  
Where never white man trod before,  
Thro' scrub, o'er plain, by mountain cleft,  
We forced our way, until to-day  
This horse and I alone are left.

Down ! with a long and stagg'ring stride,  
The good horse falls to earth,  
With staring eye and nostril wide—  
Small need to loose the girth !  
There's hopeless anguish in his eyes,  
A rattling in his throat I hear,  
"Water " is what he mutely cries,  
But not a drop is near.  
He feebly sniffs my sunburnt hand,  
He feebly answers my caress,  
Then gives one moan : I stand alone—  
Alone within the wilderness !

## MY LITTLE SWEETHEART.

My sweetheart is but five years old ;  
She has not learnt decorum yet ;  
Her cheeks are pink ; her hair like gold ;  
Her eyes are violet.


And very sweet she seems to me—  
A little fairy full of grace,  
With all her ringlets blowing free  
About her roguish face.

She pinches me, she pulls my hair,  
She steals my watch to hear it tick ;  
I can't exactly tell you where  
She hid my hat and stick.

And oh ! she makes such " dreadful eyes "—  
This little angel without wings.  
Do other angels in the skies  
Think of such wicked things ?

But sometimes she is very good  
And sits sedately on my lap  
And hears me preach (as elders should)  
But doesn't care a rap.

And then she creeps up close to me,  
And lays her cheek against my own,  
Whilst round my neck coquettishly  
Her tiny arms are thrown.



She tells me all her little cares ;  
 Her childish griefs, and childish joys ;  
 How it was *she* who stole the pears !  
                     And how she hates the boys !

Ah ! little maid, at sweet seventeen  
 You will not speak your heart to me ;  
 You will not kiss me *then*, I ween,  
                     Or sit upon my knee.

You will have scores of lovers *then*,  
 And go to dances with your mother ;  
 And learn to play off gentlemen—  
                     The one against the other.

You will “ sit out ” in dusky nooks,  
 And flirt, and smirk, and “ take an ice,”  
 And think too much about your looks—  
                     And won't be half so nice.

You will have grown a skilful hand  
 At drawing fish within your net ;  
 And few, I think, will long withstand  
                     Those eyes of violet.

I pray, dear, you may never feel  
 The wrench which tears two lives apart,  
 The careless smiles which oft conceal  
                     The anguish of the heart ;

That Peace may fold thee in her wings,  
 No thought arising, half confes't,  
 In spite of all that knowledge brings—  
                     That childhood's hours were best.

## THE RIVER OF DEATH.

I DREAMT that I stood by the River of Death,  
And the breath of the wind was an icy breath ;  
And the shades that hovered upon the bank  
Heaved, and wavered, and rose, and sank.


And the shore was lit by a darkening light  
Which shot thro' the Realms of Eternal Night ;  
And the spell which hung on the heavy air  
Was the spell of sorrow and dark despair.

Then I heard low wails, and sad echoings,  
And sighs like the sweeping of heavy wings ;  
But the tide rolled on, and its turbid wave,  
Flowing for ever, no answer gave.

I strove to pierce thro' the distant gloom  
Where the vague gigantic shadows loom ;  
I strove to see to the farther shore,  
But the rolling mists gathered more and more.

Then I stood on the brink, and I thought how strong,  
Yet calm, that River had flowed along ;  
Silent and mystical and sublime,  
From the Springs of Sin on the verge of Time.

Passionless, darksome, yet ever on  
It rolled thro' the ages past and gone ;  
And it gathered the streams of Life as it went,  
Till they one by one with its waters blent.





And I thought of the millions whose weary feet  
Have stood on the brink where the shadows meet ;  
Have stood in their doubt and their misery  
By the River that flows to the Unknown Sea—

Of those who have heard, like a rolling drum,  
The voice of the waters whisper "Come !"  
For only those who are called by Death  
Can hear the words which that River saith.

Like the wash of the waves on a far-off shore  
They hear the sound of the black flood's roar,  
And deep in the stream where the tide runs strong  
Interpret the words of its mystic song.

And I said, "O River, darksome and wide,  
Is there room for me on thy silent tide ?  
For my soul is filled with a fierce unrest,  
And I fear not the chill of thine icy breast.


"The waters of Life are bitter, I ween,  
Tho' the sun shines bright and the leaves are green  
But peace comes not with the spring wind's breath,  
For it lies far down in thy depths, O Death !—

"Where the sin and the sorrow and fierce unrest  
Are buried deep 'neath the dark wave's crest,  
And the longings wild and unsatisfied  
Are swept away on thy rushing tide."

Still no answer came from the gath'ring gloom  
Where the vague gigantic shadows loom,  
But the tide rolled on, and its turbid wave,  
Flowing for ever, no answer gave.


## LOVE AND AMBITION.

AMBITION, cased from head to heel  
In armoured dress of glittering steel,  
    Strode up a pathway narrow ;  
Seeking for foes with warrior's joy,  
He met a rosy little boy,  
    Armed with a bow and arrow.  
"Come, foolish child, and give," said he,  
"That silly plaything up to me ;  
    You'll harm yourself I fear."  
"Nay," quoth the urchin with a grin,  
"I see a chink your armour in,  
    So do not come too near."  
With loud contempt the giant laughed ;  
Quick on the string Love placed a shaft,  
    And bent his golden bow ;  
The aim was swift, the aim was true.  
Straight through the chink the arrow flew,  
    And laid the giant low.  
Dying, he raised his drooping head :  
"I deemed no foe on earth," he said,  
    "Could thus my breastplate pierce ;  
Idiot to fail to recognize  
That godlike form, those shining eyes,  
    Which rule the universe."



## A MEDLEY.

EASTWARD in the skies of morning rosy tinges streak the  
gray,  
Bars of crimson change to golden—glitt'ring heralds of  
the day,  
Like a blood-red shield uprising swims the sun in palest  
blue,  
Crowns the hills with crests of splendour, flashes on the  
trembling dew ;  
Till the grass seems strewn with jewels, loosely strung,  
and red with dawn—  
Nature's gems that gleam and quiver on the bosom of  
the Morn.  
Far to Eastward, far to Northward, stretch the hills in  
purple chains,  
Far to Southward, far to Westward, waves the grass on  
yellow plains ;  
Fresh and blithely blow the breezes, drive the cloud,  
and move the lea  
With the roll of grassy billows surging like a northern  
sea.  
Ah ! what mem'ries stir within me as I ride thro' scenes  
like these,  
Thro' the silence only broken by the voices of the  
breeze.  
Voices of the rushing west wind chanting anthems weird  
and grand,  
Mystic melodies of Nature that few hearts can under-  
stand.



I have loved the voice of Nature—loved the music of  
the breeze,  
Sighing with a tender cadence thro' the branches of the  
trees ;  
Loved the triumph of the Tempest blinding flash and  
deaf'ning roar,  
When Heaven's batteries have opened, echoing from  
shore to shore.  
Soft and tender is the fancy which thro' all my being  
thrills,  
When the chequered lights and shadows play upon the  
purple hills ;  
When the burning skies to westward fade to floods of  
amber light,  
And the lemon tints of sunset melt into the dusks of night.  
By the campfire in the silence when the light begins to  
wane,  
Echoes of the dead, dead voices seem to fill the air again ;  
When the tall stems of the gum trees stand like sheeted  
sentinels,  
And the curlew's plaintive wailing sounds like weird  
funereal knells ;  
Grander than the noblest poem, awful in its mystery,  
Is a voice from mem'ry speaking when that voice has  
ceased to be.  
I have sung the thoughts within me tho' the world may  
sneer and say :  
In the vain pursuit of shadows he has cast his life away.  
Never shall he merit honour who but works for praise  
alone ;  
Never shall he gain a triumph who despairs when over-  
thrown ;  
Never shall he wear the laurel who grows dumb when  
critics sting—  
Whom the dread of censure silenced when the spirit  
bade him sing !

On the deep sea of existence like frail barks our lives  
are blown,  
Where the helmsman's hand is hidden and the harbour  
is unknown.  
He is best and he is noblest who has kept through good  
and ill  
Something of his purer nature, something of his child-  
hood still.  
But our souls grow stained and deadened, dark with  
passion, sin, and care,  
And we sow the seeds of folly, reap the harvest of  
despair.  
When amidst the roar of combat, thrust for thrust, and  
stroke for stroke,  
Sabres flash from blue to crimson, hissing through the  
rolling smoke ;  
When the bugle note is silent, and the rushing squadrons  
reel,  
Meeting in a shock like thunder, crash of harness, clash  
of steel,  
Gladly would I fall in battle fighting in the foremost  
van,  
For the sword of Sorrow pierceth deeper than the sword  
of Man.  
Idle thought ! To deem that dying thus could expiate  
our sin,  
That the soul could with the body perish in the battle's  
din.  
Death is but the gloomy portal to the realms of the  
Unknown,  
Where the laws that rule all Nature centre in one law  
alone !  
In the light beyond the Shadow, in that light beyond  
the light,  
Where the secrets of existence flash at last upon the  
sight ;

In the deep beyond the distance, in the sphere beyond  
the spheres,  
Truth has hid the golden keynote to the mysteries of  
years.  
Ah ! I doubt not that hereafter we shall pass from change  
to change,  
All the spirit growing finer, all the thought with wider  
range ;  
On from region unto region where no mist our vision  
mars,  
Till we see with perfect insight in some life beyond the  
stars.  
There are deeper myst'ries hidden in the frailest flowers  
that blow  
Than in all the lore of ages, all that greatest thinkers  
know.  
Deem not tho' the flowers are withered that they will  
not come again ;  
Winter sees them fade and perish, Spring will bring  
them with the rain.  
Deem not tho' we pass in silence that we pass for ever-  
more—  
Here we only grope in darkness wand'ring by an un-  
known shore.  
Death will make us heirs of knowledge and unroll before  
the sight  
Vistas of eternal splendour widening thro' the Infinite.

## FREDERICK III.

OBIIT JUNE 15, 1888.

“ His life was gentle ; and the elements  
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, this was a man.”  
—SHAKESPEARE.

ON lordly terrace, and on palace wall,  
An awful silence crept ;  
With noiseless footsteps up the columned hall  
An unseen presence swept—  
God's angel, Azrael, whom men call Death,  
Breathed on the monarch with his icy breath.

And as he passed, grasping his viewless brand,  
The shadow of his wings  
Darkened the eagles of the Fatherland,  
From peasants unto kings  
Rolled, like deep murmurs of a funeral drum  
Thro' the wide world, a voice, “ The end has come ! ”

The world is German in this common grief ;  
She mourns the man alone.  
Above the diadem, the laurel leaf,  
The sceptre, and the throne,  
She sees the hero-soul ; and manhood's pride  
Is nobler such a man has lived and died.

Look not upon the monarch but the man  
Whom Death at length has freed.  
Hero of nobler victories than Sedan !  
The grandeur of whose creed  
The world saw, and the world-wide whisper ran,  
" Above the pride of kings, this was a man."



## A FEDERAL SONG.

THEY lay the stone whose eyes may never see  
A Nation's turrets rise above the plain.  
They sow the seed who may not reap the grain ;  
Futurity  
Will bless that toil which wrought thro' stress and  
strain,  
Her Unity.

It yet shall be. Build on, and heed not scorn ;  
Build fair and strong a nation's towering height ;  
In massy grandeur weld her scattered might  
By schism torn.  
After the darkness and the Dawn's gray light  
Cometh the Morn.

Build on ! Build on ! Hold with a nerve of steel,  
Above all meaner pride and jealous hate,  
That higher faith which makes a nation great.  
They rightly feel  
Who take for the broad basement of the State  
The Common-weal.

Build on ! Build on ! Deep-pulsing thro' the land,  
Thro' all this island-continent there stirs  
A throb, a voice, she feels, and knows is hers,  
From strand to strand  
A whisper stealing thro' the Dawn avers  
The hour at hand.

Build on ! Build on ! E'en as the restless blue  
Circles her sleeping mountains, silence-bound,  
Our hope, our faith, our love shall gird her round  
With fealty true,  
Whilst from the old-world wrecks which strew the  
ground,  
We build anew.

## ORPHEUS TO EURYDICE.

THERE is no joy in Heaven if Love be not,  
But, if we love, this Earth may yet be Heaven.  
For what is Hell or Heaven but seed we sow,  
Grown to maturity, within the soul ?  
This is the law of Nature and the gods—  
That each be free to act, yet by his acts  
Achieve his misery or happiness.  
Then choose we Heaven. Let Duty temper love ;  
For thro' its iron gate and flinty path  
We reach the happy meadows, and, beyond,  
The Highest Good ; and, if that path be rough,  
Deep-shadowed, dreary, 'tis not all so dark  
But Love can light it ; for the soul that grasps  
Love only, spurning duty, knows not Love,  
But passion, which consumes the soul and leaves  
A Hell within it. Therefore, O my Love,  
Choose we the better part. Let passion be ;  
And, if our lot be lowly, and our lives  
The common round of petty care and toil,  
Who is there that would choose voluptuous ease,  
Feeling his manhood in him ; and his heart  
Strong to resist the buffets of the world,  
The long stern struggle, and the frequent fall ?  
For in the toil and in the strife alone  
We find our strength, until at last we stand  
High on Olympus, even as the gods.  
There shall we gaze back at the years and know

'Twas for the best. Ah! in a world like ours  
There is no obstacle but falls before  
The strength of an indomitable will  
Linked to a love like thine. Come thou to me.  
My soul is thine. Thou art my destiny.  
The gods have whispered it. Thro' all this Life  
Thy soul and mine are wedded, and beyond,  
Thro' Death, to the Hereafter, Love shall lead  
And we shall follow. It is Destiny.  
No change can alter and no power avert  
The Unseen Hand that gathers where it will  
Two lives, and welds them in one living love.

## ODE ON THE AUSTRALIAN CENTENARY. ✓

GIRT with the wreathing mists  
And shadows of the night,  
Dark-robed, Australia lay  
And waited for the light ;  
And heard the night wind whisper soft and clear :  
" Land of the Southern Cross, the Dawn is near !  
The Dawn is near ! "

Soft in the Eastern skies,  
Flushing the summer sea,  
She saw her morning rise—  
The morn of Liberty.  
Then sang the wind across the ocean's foam :  
" Land of the Southern Cross, the Dawn has come,  
The Dawn has come ! "

Blest with God's grace divine,  
Queen of the Southern Sea !  
Bright shall thy glory shine,  
Great shall thy future be.  
Our hope, our faith, our love, on Him we cast.  
" Land of the Southern Cross, the Dawn is past,  
The Dawn is past ! "

Past with its quivering rays—  
Forecasts of things to be !  
Past to the riper days  
Of larger Liberty !  
Then sing, ye summer seas that guard our home :  
" Behold ! The Dawn is past ! The Day has come,  
The Day has come ! "

### MARY MAGDALENE.

A CHILD of sin and crowned with shame  
Unto the Master's feet she came ;  
From shapely head to ankle bare  
Fell the broad ripples of her hair ;  
And for a soft and radiant dress  
She wore her loveliness.

A perfect form, a faultless face,  
Fairer than sculptor's art could trace ;  
Ripe as the full rose in its prime  
Ere yet it feels the touch of Time ;  
But now with suppliant eyes she stood—  
The type of fallen womanhood.

Meekly she stood, whose wanton pride  
Had flung all purity aside ;  
Whose lips had tasted poisonous wine—  
The deadly vintage of that vine  
Whose green and comely branches bear  
The fruit of Passion and Despair.

Silent she stood, with weary feet,  
And heart whose joy had ceased to beat ;  
For all the charms that Pleasure brought  
Calmed not the maddening voice of thought,  
The fierce unrest, the cruel pain,  
Of one who hopes—and hopes in vain.

The sunshine wrapt her in its fold  
And tinged her burnished hair with gold ;  
On silken lashes, darkly hung,  
The beaded tear-drops, trembling, clung ;  
She seemed more fair in her despair  
Than ever in the days that were.

No gift she brought—yet one complete—  
Who washed with tears the Master's feet.  
She gave a gem of priceless worth  
Above the jewels of the Earth ;  
For, with true faith, and eyes with sorrow dim,  
She gave her heart to Him.

## THE BAR IMMUTABLE.

In the long lingering hours when Earth lies hid  
In robes of darkness, and the night has come  
To reign alone in calm sweet majesty,  
When Sleep on aërial wing has fled away  
And given no solace to the throbbing brain,  
Oft have I trod the corridors of Thought  
And watched, as from the tombs of Memory  
The ghosts of long dead years arise and pass  
In slow procession—erstwhile, Kings of Time,  
But now dethroned, discrowned, and sceptreless ;  
Shrouded in silence and in mystery.  
Glide on, ye Phantom Monarchs of the Past,  
In solemn grandeur ! From the sepulchres  
That fringe the burial ground of centuries  
Gray rolling clouds and misty damps arise  
Wherein vivific currents flash and dart ;  
As meteors crossing the ethereal blue  
At dazzling speed—for one swift instant crown  
The brow of night with splendid aureole ;  
So flashes Memory's lightning thro' the Past  
Whitening the shadows, 'till all luminous  
The vista stretches, and the eye discerns  
The half-forgotten scenes, the moving throng  
Of old familiar faces : All that *was*  
But nevermore again on Earth *shall be*.  
With solemn steps I pace the paths I trod  
In youth's sweet spring, when inexperienced thought



Pictured the Future as a pleasant dream  
 And gilded life with rich deceptive hue ;  
 I hear again soft and reverberant  
 The echoes of dead voices in the air ;  
 And all the good and evil of long years  
 Is mirrored in the glass of Retrospect.  
 But what avails it, if we ever thus  
 Stand gazing down the misty aisles of thought  
 And robe our lives with Mem'ry's fantasies ?  
 Time's rushing flood has reached and passed them by,  
 And still sweeps on. For who and what can stand  
 Before the force of that resistless flood ?  
 All, all, go down before it. Beauty, Age,  
 The golden dreams of Youth, fair Fancy's halls,  
 The airy castles proud Ambition built,  
 Swept at its touch to cold Oblivion's shore.  
 The mystery of Life hangs o'er my soul  
 In weighted horror. For what shall we gain  
 If by long arduous pilgrimage we reach  
 The highest pinnacles of human thought ?  
 'Tis but the limit which our faculties  
 May touch but not exceed : The key of Death  
 Alone can ope the gates of the Unseen.

. . . . .  
 A higher gift than reason must be ours  
 Ere we can comprehend that germ of life  
 Which permeates Nature, understand the Pow'r  
 That rules ethereal principalities,  
 Makes chaos worlds, conceives eternities.  
 Rough lies the path, dim-lighted, and beyond—  
 The dark Unknown : That bar immutable,  
 At which our thoughts in weak confusion pause  
 And beat their wings against the gates of Heaven.

## RETROSPECTION.

ALONE she stood, with careless grace,  
Like one whose thoughts were far away :  
Upon her tender girlish face  
I watched the lights and shadows play ;  
I watched the fringes of her eyes  
Sweep her soft cheek ; and overhead  
From the calm heights of summer skies,  
Thro' leafy boughs the sunbeams spread ;  
Nor could I judge which seemed most fair,  
The sunshine or her golden hair.

Around her feet the violets grew ;  
Above her head the woodland birds  
Made music in a key so true,  
I would not change it into words.  
'Twas Nature's song in Nature's scene,  
And she was Nature's fairest flower ;  
And that which *is* and might have been  
Were all unthought of in that hour.  
I had not learnt, I did not guess,  
How joy can turn to bitterness.

The Past is gone. The rolling years  
Have brought their pleasures and their pain ;  
And change, and manhood's hopes and fears,  
Will chase such phantoms from the brain.

Our lives in different grooves are cast,  
And she has other cares to bear ;  
The misty curtain of the past  
Divides us from the days that were.  
Yet through the haze I often see  
That face which once was all to me.

It may be that the influence  
Of those old days hangs round me still ;  
It may be that a finer sense  
Will guard the hand from deeds of ill ;  
It may be that, if aught of good  
My life has shown or tried to show,  
If aught of suffering was withstood  
With seeming patience, all I owe  
To her I loved, whose memory brings  
The thoughts of nobler purer things.

Scoff not at youth. In youth alone  
Our thoughts are pure, our hearts are true ;  
For then we have not learnt to own  
How vain the phantoms we pursue.  
And what is life, and what is man,  
Without that freshness of the heart  
Which once was ours, but never can  
Return when youth and faith depart ?  
Time gives us much, but who will say—  
*As much* as all it takes away.

## IN THE BIG WARD.

A WAN white cheek on the pillow lying ;  
A fevered gleam in the dark brown eye ;  
Not twelve years old—and the boy is dying  
Inch by inch as the days roll by !

Inch by inch as the days are fleeting  
The young life drifts where its pain shall cease,  
Where the weary heart shall stay its beating,  
And the soul shall sleep 'neath the wings of Peace.

In the white-washed ward there are faces dreary,  
Low moans of anguish and laboured breath ;  
But none so patient and yet so weary  
As the child who lies there waiting for death.

Men scorn thee, Death, amidst squadrons crashing,  
When the red steel leaps in the strong right hand ;  
Men hold it but gain when sabres are flashing  
To die for their faith and their Fatherland.

Men face thee, Death, with a nerve unshaken,  
On the deadly breach in the fortress wall ;  
But bravest he who by hope forsaken  
Endures like the child in this white-washed hall.

Ah ! Why must the children suffer and languish,  
And wince and quiver beneath thy thong ?  
Why crush, O Death, with thy terrible anguish  
The pure young lives that have done no wrong ?

'Tis hard to know that the strong are dying,  
Yet manhood and death may be reconciled ;  
But O 'tis harder to hear the sighing,  
And watch the pangs, of a helpless child !

Friend ! Who knows in the dim hereafter  
If shall be meted to him again  
For tears and anguish, sweet love and laughter,  
A cycle of joy for a season of pain ?

But this we know—that the curse primeval,  
Which strikes alike at the weak and strong,  
Spares not the children, who did no evil,  
But stays their laughter and stills their song.

## IN MEMORIAM.

(VIOLA, A TALENTED CONTRIBUTOR TO *The Queenslander*,  
WAS LATELY DROWNED AT SEA.)

SWEET is the sleep of Death that brings  
Release from life, relief from pain ;  
Where Trouble's joyless echoings  
Can never reach the ear again ;  
But the white wings of Peace are spread  
Like Angel's pinions overhead.

Sleep on ! where the dark billows roll  
And the sea-breezes whisper low ;  
Sleep on ! Beyond our weak control  
A deeper wisdom wills it so ;  
What men call Death is but the shadowy night  
Which links the Finite with the Infinite.

Deep be thy sleep, beyond all pain ;  
Nor doubt that in the Spheres above  
The majesty of Death shall wane  
Beside the majesty of Love.  
Tho' Death may pluck the purest flowers and best,  
'Tis but that God may fold them closer to His breast.

## DEATH.


O DEATH, and must thy marble hand  
Be laid upon each human heart ?  
Can none dispute thy dread command,  
All-powerful tyrant that thou art ?  
Seeming afar, but ever near—  
A sword suspended overhead,  
How slight the causes can appear  
Which hurl the sword and part the thread !  
And often in the early spring,  
When hope is young and life is sweet,  
Is seen the shadow of thy wing,  
Is heard the echo of thy feet.  
And oft thou comest unawares,  
When life is in its summer prime,  
Turning our pleasures into cares  
And summer into winter time ;  
Seeming afar, but ever near—  
So when at length our parting breath  
We yield Thee—in another sphere  
Thou giv'st us Life, Almighty Death.

### THREE YEARS AGO.

Nor many years have passed away  
Since last I saw that gentle face ;  
Not many years !  
To those whose hearts are light and gay  
The time of such a little space  
Swift disappears.  
But those few years have been to me  
A weary blank eternity.

Three years ago ! I knew you then,  
You were the fairest of the fair ;  
Three years ago !  
Your beauty stirred the hearts of men,  
They said none could with yours compare ;  
I loved you so,  
I felt with pride my bosom swell  
To hear her praised I loved so well.

Where beauties grew like comely flowers,  
Your stately grace outshone them all,  
Like some sweet rose  
Which from the sheltering leafy bowers  
Has climbed the garden wall,  
And lovelier grows ;  
Blooms Queen amongst the roses there,  
Sweet like her sisters, but more fair.





You thought it was a boyish dream  
That future years would drive away ;  
Three years have past.  
That years like centuries can seem,  
That weeks seems years, an hour a day,  
I know at last ;  
But still my " boyish dream " remains,  
Still in my heart thine image reigns.


" Come what come may ! " I know that now  
For ever thou art lost to me,  
In three short years.  
To Fate's relentless law I bow,  
And wish all happiness to thee,  
Till Death appears  
With lightning stride or footstep slow ;  
I love you as " Three Years Ago."

## TO NINA.

NINA, if a heart be true  
    Whatsoever it endures,  
Faithful as the skies are blue,  
    Nina, then that heart is yours.  
If I sought a friend to find  
    (When my friends were far and few)  
Loving, pitiful, and kind,  
    Nina, I should turn to you.

Think not, tho' the Ocean wide,  
    Restless, seething, rolls between,  
Those upon the farther side  
    Your devotion have not seen.  
Think not tho' Pacific's tide  
    Keeps you hidden from our view  
That we, as the seasons glide,  
    Think less lovingly of you.

You have proved your love to be  
    No mere empty hollow form  
But a stout old oaken tree  
    Which can weather any storm.  
And, as years roll on, its root  
    Shall but gain a firmer hold.  
Friendships like the juice of fruit  
    But grow mellow when they're old.



And tho' now Australia's sky  
Forms our starry canopy,  
Yet our thoughts will often fly  
To our home beyond the sea.  
In a race the winning steed  
Boldly all the fences clears,  
So our thoughts like coursers speed  
And outstrip the crawling years.

And when Time has done his worst,  
And our heads are old and gray,  
Some of us our chains have burst,  
And those left care not to stay ;  
When a mound and hollow urn  
Tells the world we are no more,  
Friendship's torch will brighter burn,  
Nina, on another shore !

## LINES ON THE DEATH OF LONGFELLOW.\*

THE singer mute, the lyre unstrung,  
Dust—first from off earth's bosom sprung—  
    To earth return !  
Yet a great quenchless torch of song,  
Lit by no feeble hand, shall strong  
    For ever burn.

Its light shall shine from strand to strand,  
And, blazing o'er that Western land,  
    The ocean span ;  
And great posterity shall read  
The tenets of a Christ-like creed—  
    Goodwill to man.

And though within the grave they lay  
An earthly tenement of clay,  
    And mourn thy loss,  
Thou standest by thy Master's side  
Who for thy sake was crucified  
    Upon the cross.

Far truer honour than the wreath  
Of sadly coloured laurel leaf,  
    Which decks thy tomb,  
Was the great throb of sympathy  
For all those near and dear to thee,  
    In this—their gloom.

\* The poet died on the 27th of February, 1882.

## CHRISTMAS.

ONCE more breaks the joyous morning !  
Christmas Day is here !  
Once more see the welcome dawning  
Of a glad New Year !  
Once more gather round the entrance  
Of the church's door,  
Rich and poor, and proud and lowly,  
Strong and weak, the meek, the holy ;  
Gathered there to worship Him whom heaven and earth  
adore.


Happy faces ! Bright reflections  
Of the hearts within ;  
Faces showing stern corrections  
For some former sin ;  
Faces aged, and worn, and weary ;  
Faces young and fair,  
Faces beautiful from sorrow,  
Faces careless of the morrow,  
Faces gloomy, sad, and thoughtful,  
All are there.

## CHRISTMAS.

WITH sweet memories, kindly faces  
Thronging joyous in his train ;  
Thro' the world Old Christmas paces,  
Binds us with a golden chain,  
Chains of Love and bonds of Friendship, fetters firm yet  
light to bear,  
And before his face the shadows fade and vanish into air.

Yet amidst our Christmas gladness  
Comes a feeling deep and wide,  
Runs a vein of tender sadness  
Like some zephyr o'er the tide,  
As we speak with softened voices and a secret cruel pain  
Of those hearts we loved, whom Christmas nevermore will  
greet again.

Not for long and not for ever  
Is our sojourn here below ;  
Sorrows throng and Death will sever  
Hearts which no dissensions know ;  
Yet while we remember sadly those we ne'er shall see  
again  
Let us keep a hearty greeting for the friends who still  
remain.



Then with gentle tact, not wrongly,  
Put aside the vacant chair,  
Not because we feel less strongly,  
That the loved one is not there ;  
But because Life lies before us and we all must bear our  
load,  
And we needs must cheer each other for we climb a  
rugged road.

Shall we vex our dear ones living  
By our mem'ries of the Dead ?  
Shall we sadden this thanksgiving  
By the fruitless tears we shed ?  
If the spirit be Eternal, Death and Sorrow, what are they  
But the gates unbarred which open upwards to the larger  
Day ?


## THE UNKNOWN LAND.

CHRISTMAS again ! With a solemn tread  
Comes the Monarch old and gray,  
To join the years that are gone and dead,  
The hopes that have passed away ;  
And with mournful eyes I watched him stand  
On the shadowy verge of that Unknown Land.

His brow was not crowned with the silver frost,  
He wore not his robe of snow ;  
His wreaths of holly-tree were lost,  
And his wand of mistletoe ;  
But in emerald robes of leaf and moss  
He stood 'neath the light of the Southern Cross.

And heavy the burden the old man bore  
On his shoulders wide and vast,  
To the tomb of the years that have gone before,  
To the silent shades of Oblivion's shore,  
To the Sepulchre of the Past ;  
The thought, the faith, the hope, the fear,  
Of millions were laid on the dying year.

And I said : " Old man, with the beard of snow,  
And the dim and failing eyes,  
Where are the friends of long ago,  
Who have learnt the secret we do not know ;  
And shall they yet arise  
To greet us again with outstretched hand  
On the shadowy shores of that Unknown Land ? "





Then in solemn tones the seer replied :

“ All things must pass away ;

But those who strive to stem the tide,

Who bear in labour side by side

The burden of the day,

Shall grasp again on that silent shore

The hands of those who have gone before.”

He was gone, but I did not see him go

In his green and leafy dress ;

For I sat and thought of the care and woe

In many a home that I used to know ;

And the joy and happiness

Which Death removes with unsparing hand,

But which God restores in that Unknown Land.

TO BRENDA SLEEPING.

(FROM "LORAINÉ," AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.)

O PEACE ! Kiss her eyes with thy wings, let her  
slumbers be sweet  
And calm 'neath the shadow of pinions majestic and  
still,  
With dreams like the music of waters in rhythmical beat,  
And guard her for ever from sorrow and shield her from  
ill ;

From the taint of my love, from the passion and quench-  
less unrest,  
The storm of despair which is rising tumultuous and  
fierce !  
O Peace, if thy wings have for ever forsaken my breast,  
Fold them closer around her like shields which no  
sorrow can pierce !



## LANCELOT.

I SEE thro' mists of dark despair,  
Her stately form arise ;  
The glimmer of her golden hair  
The radiance of her eyes.  
Mercy is thine, Immortal Powers !  
O make her soul, beyond the skies,  
Pure as the amaranthine flowers  
That bloom in Paradise.  
*My* soul conceived the deadly sin,  
And on *my* soul let vengeance fall.  
I bow the knee to Heaven's decree—  
But in Thy love forgive her all.

Too late ! Too late ! for hope or prayer !  
My eyes grow glazed and weak,  
I stagger in the blinding glare,  
Too faint at last to speak ;  
My soul is sick and dark within ;  
A voice is pealing thro' the air :  
" Who sow the deadly seeds of sin  
Shall only reap despair."  
And, stricken by that awful voice,  
I sink upon the burning sod ;  
And in the Fate for which I wait,  
I recognize the hand of God.

## LOVE AND FAME.

NIGHT shook o'er Earth her raven locks,  
Black clouds had curtained all the sky ;  
And with long sighs and bursting shocks,  
The restless winds went roaring by.

A sculptor sat in loose attire,  
With dreamy eyes fixed on the blaze ;  
Within the glowing heart of fire  
He saw the scenes of other days.

In many a line from wall to wall  
The blocks of milk-white marble stood ;  
Cupids, and stalwart knights and tall,  
And types of lovely womanhood.

Pale was his face, and thin with care—  
None sought to buy his works of Art ;  
The darkness of a grim despair  
Was spreading slowly o'er his heart.

" Alas ! " he sighed, " no man may be  
A prophet in his native land ;  
Or Fate has laid her curse on me,  
And marred the cunning of my hand.

" And she I love says ' Love is dead,'  
And laughs to scorn my dreams of Fame ;  
The light of other days has fled,  
And left me only care and shame.

" I cannot carve upon the stone  
 The vision that I see in air—  
 The face of her I love alone,  
 The face that haunts me everywhere.

Then in his ear a whisp'ring voice  
 Spake softly : " Carve upon the stone  
 The angel vision of thy choice—  
 The face of her thou lov'st alone.

" Carve thou Love's Angel, sweet and fair,  
 With deathless face and wings outspread,  
 The Power that rules us everywhere ;  
 And she will say—' Love is not dead.' "

Then from his seat the sculptor rose ;  
 The fadeless light of genius shone  
 Upon his brow. With skilful blows  
 He wrought upon the milk-white stone.

And slowly from the stone there grew  
 The outlines, mystical and grand ;  
 And, tho' unseen to mortal view,  
 An angel sped the sculptor's hand.

Long hours he wrought with steadfast face  
 Till the dim grays of morn flushed clear ;  
 Noon passed, and twilight grew apace,  
 And Night's dark pinions hovered near.

And still he wrought, and when the Dawn  
 Crowned the blue hills with roseate light,  
 Bathed in the glory of the morn—  
 Love's Angel shone in spotless white,

With deathless face, and wings outspread ;  
And smiling, from the milk-white stone,  
Her face who said that Love was dead—  
The face of her he loved alone,

But made divine. He gazed, and knew  
The vision he had seen in air ;  
Then on the ground his chisel threw,  
And slept beside the Angel there,

Slept long and sound—a dreamless sleep—  
The sleep of Death. And she who said  
“ Love is no more ” crept there to weep,  
“ O my true love, Love is not dead.”

. . . . .  
Night shook o'er Earth her sable locks ;  
Black clouds had curtained all the sky,  
And with long sighs and bursting shocks  
The restless winds went roaring by.

The wild winds sang : “ When Death shall free  
The throbbing brain, the toiling hand,  
Then, *only then*, a man may be  
A prophet in his native land.”

## THE SINGER.

SHE sang of Hope, of happy days,  
Of glorious spring and summer's prime ;  
Softer than old-time minstrels' lays  
Uprose that melody sublime.

She sang of Faith, of firm resolve,  
Of strong unwavering constancy ;  
To trust and live till death should solve  
The problem of life's mystery.

She sang of Death—that sceptre grim—  
Of pain, and age, and faltering gait ;  
Of eyes once bright, now faint and dim ;  
Of hearths and homes made desolate.

She sang of Love ; and as she sang  
Her colour came and went again ;  
No words can tell how clearly rang  
The cadence of that sweet refrain.

She sang no more ; for on that night  
There came a shadow and a gloom  
Which hid the singer from our sight,  
And hung around a darkened room.

And now she sings where angels sing  
A nobler song in spheres above ;  
Where Death no more can enter in,  
And Hope and Faith are lost in Love.

But from the echoes of the past  
Her voice comes ringing back again,  
To tell the hearts who knew her last  
That Hope and Faith and Love remain.





## DISCONTENT.

Does the daily round seem dreary ?  
Does the path of life seem rough ?  
Do we find our steps grow weary,  
Thinking we have toiled enough ?  
In the west  
Looms the stormy cloudy weather  
With no shining silver lining,  
Soul and body tire together ;  
All we feel—a yearning pining  
But for rest.  
Cease my soul this sinful sighing ;  
Is thy path to be all roses ?  
Prizes won without the trying ?  
Pleasures where no cross opposes  
What you will ?  
Is another's lot so sunny  
That thou need'st must thus repine  
Is the corn and oil and honey  
To be nobody's but thine ?  
Peace ! Be still !  
'Tis the path we all must follow,  
'Tis the common destiny ;  
Pleasure's prizes are but hollow,  
Sweet delusive mockery.  
Time doth teach

Life is meant to be not pleasures,  
Not all dull laborious toil,  
But two happy blended measures  
Acting as a counterfoil  
Each to each.

There are stars whose rays have never  
Reached this world of sin and sorrow ;  
Travelling onward, travelling ever,  
Still their advent is to-morrow,  
Still to-morrow !

Through immeasurable spaces,  
Through the voids all uncreated,  
Past the high eternal places,  
Still their advent must be dated,  
" Still to-morrow."

Like the starlight which is roaming  
Earthwards, though without our view,  
Perhaps to-morrow in life's gloaming  
Some glad change may come for you--  
As the ray,

Long deferred and long expected,  
Seems a brighter hue to borrow  
From the hopes of years reflected  
In its advent—not " to-morrow,"  
But " to-day."

There are silent depths of ocean  
Which no sounding line can measure,  
Airy regions where the motion  
Of the kingly eagle's pinions  
Is unknown.

The vast secrets which are hidden,  
Like some deeply buried treasure,  
All shall solve when they are bidden,  
To death's drearish dominions—  
But alone !

There are secret workings hidden,  
In the dull monotony ;  
Though foreknowledge is forbidden,  
Veiled from human scrutiny.  
Leave to One  
Who can comprehend our yearnings—  
Human weakness, doubt, and sorrow—  
All thy passionate heart-burnings :  
He will not forget thy morrow  
When thy work is done.

VÂLÈ. ✓

WITHIN my soul I hear the strain—

The cadence of a song which tells  
That Life is mingled joy and pain,  
And made of greetings and farewells.

Ever the currents of Life's tide

Flow thro' the channels Fate has made  
O'er plain, by rugged mountain-side,  
And now in sunshine, now in shade.

I pray the Unseen Hand may steer

Your course through life with face serene,  
With deeper joys from year to year,  
Where Care's dark shadows are not seen.

If Northern skies should seem bereft

Of that which makes the Southern fair,  
Our sun has kissed your eyes and left  
Its rays of softened glory there.

So do not say you fear to dwell

Where skies are grey and winds are chill  
The radiance of a sunnier clime

Will linger round your presence still.

And when through other scenes you roam  
And other voices greet your ear,

Your thoughts at times may wander home  
To dwell with some who miss you here ;

*Then* if my "rude untutored lines"

By chance offend not, let them be  
As links within a chain which binds  
My homage to your memory.

Life is a maze where paths entwine  
But to diverge as Fortune tends  
Until we pass that trembling line  
Where Love begins and Friendship ends.  
And still within my soul I hear  
That song's sweet melancholy swell,  
And all that I will whisper, dear,  
Is simply greeting and—Farewell !


## AUSTRALIA MILITANT.

(WRITTEN ON THE DEPARTURE OF THE AUSTRALIAN  
TROOPS FOR THE SOUDAN.)

BLOW soft, ye southern breezes, blow ! For see  
How bright the star which guards our destiny  
    Sheds its soft ray !  
Sail on, ye warriors, on your northward course,  
And bear the banner of the Southern Cross  
    Far in the fray  
Where the old war-worn standard waves, and dare—  
Beside those glorious folds—to plant it there !

When furious and fast the battel runs,  
Australia's eyes will watch her soldier sons ;  
    When through the haze  
Of battle clouds the dusky hordes appear,  
Australia's sons will hold her honour dear.  
    Should glory's rays  
Shine where the southern banners proudly wave,  
Then not in vain her chivalry she gave !

When the swift-shooting spear and hissing ball  
Sing through the thinning ranks, and comrades fall ;  
    When like the blast  
Bursts the wild charge upon the square again—  
Bursts like a flood the human hurricane ;  
    Then stern and fast  
In the dread breach may Young Australia stand,  
Firm as the mountains of her native land !



## THE SHEPHERD'S LAST SLEEP.

In the old log hut the shepherd lay,  
His fevered cheek by the hot wind fanned ;  
And he dreamt of the dear ones far away,  
And the fields and the flowers of his native land.

And o'er his face crept a tender smile  
As he dreamt of one who was dearer still,  
And the stately home in his native isle.  
Ah ! if dreams could only their vows fulfil !

To the old log hut by the lonely creek  
With naked sword came the Angel of Death ;  
Pale grew the sleeper's hectic cheek  
As he felt the touch of that icy breath.

In the lonely bush in a far-off land,  
Where the wattles bloom and the brighlows wave ;  
Laid to his rest by a stranger's hand,  
The exile sleeps in his nameless grave.

## SUBMISSION.

EACH thinks no trial harder than his own ;  
Each thinks his cross the heaviest is to bear ;  
There are no hearts where sorrow is unknown,  
And care is everywhere.  
There is no sweet without some bitter sting—  
No rose without a thorn ;  
The man who shall not know what anguish is,  
Is yet unborn.  
Yet some there be who murmur at their lot,  
And waste their strength in striving to be free ;  
Some who, impatient, crave they know not what,  
And brood in vain o'er what can never be.  
And some there be who round their fetters twine  
A garland of fresh leaves and roses fair—  
Brave hearts, who struggle on and ne'er repine,  
And gladness carry with them everywhere.  
Oh, restless, seething mass !—Humanity !  
Borne down, yet struggling on in mute despair !  
There is no cross which man on earth hath borne  
Which man still cannot bear.



MARION RAYNE.

THE roses have climbed up the garden wall,  
But one hangs highest above them all—  
The sweet Queen-Rose on her slender stem,  
With the morning dew for a diadem ;  
As her delicate leaves to the sun she spreads  
The roses beneath her must hang their heads,  
Sweet Marion Rayne !

The lilies that float on the still lagoon  
Are pale as the rays of the crescent moon,  
And I strove to judge, with a sweet despair,  
Which was the fairest that floated there ;  
An equal homage I paid to each,  
Till I spied one floating beyond my reach—  
Sweet Marion Rayne !

The violets lie thick in their modest bed,  
And sweet on the air is the scent they shed ;  
I have plucked the flowers that you love the best  
To lie on the heaven of your tender breast ;  
But the sweetest flower in the tiny sheaf  
I found concealed 'neath a shady leaf,  
Fair Marion Rayne !

It is high to reach to the red red rose ;  
The water looks deep where the lily grows ;

But tell me, dear, may the lily rare,  
Or the rose, be plucked if a heart can dare ?  
Must the fairest flower that Nature made  
Bloom on alone till her beauties fade,  
Sweet Marion Rayne ?

Is it pride that shines in your deep dark eyes,  
And makes your soft bosom sink and rise ?  
Is it love or pride that has blanched your cheek—  
That trembles on lips which refuse to speak ?  
And why is your face so cold and set ?  
Is true love hid like the violet,  
Sweet Marion Rayne ?



## SAILING. ✓

AH ! How freshly blew the breezes  
As they bore us from the shore !  
All that pleasure's senses pleases  
Lingers round those days of yore.  
As our snow-white lateen sail  
Bellied out before the wind,  
And our boat beneath it reeling  
Onward rushed until 'twas heeling  
Almost o'er ;  
And we flew before the gale  
And the white waves roared behind.

When you raised your voice to sing  
In a key so strong and true,  
E'en the sea-birds on the wing  
Seemed to pause and list to you.  
Deep the meaning of your song  
Rolled into mine inmost soul ;  
All the ocean air was ringing  
With the sweetness of your singing,  
And my secret kept so long  
Burst at last from my control.

## YOU AND I.

(SONG FROM "LORAINE," AN UNPUBLISHED POEM.)

WE met, you and I, in the morning fair  
When the sun shone bright and the skies were blue.  
No shadow of sorrow, no thought of care  
Had chilled the breath of the summer air,  
And my soul went out to you—  
Went out with a fierce and passionate beat,  
Went out with a fervent and quivering heat,  
A love that was tender and true.

We parted, Love, in the twilight grey,  
When the mists had gathered over the sea.  
And I knew that the Dawn of another day,  
The sheen on the sea, and the strong sun's ray,  
Could bring no happiness back to me.  
Ah ! What is there left but grief and pain  
For the heart that loves—and loves in vain !

But I pray in my grief that thy life may be  
Crowned with the joy of a shadowless calm.  
And my heart will follow thee over the sea  
For my soul is linked with thy destiny  
To guard from sorrow and shield from harm,  
Tho' my love is nothing to thee.  
Tho' the love that I crave for thou canst not give—  
And I ask for nought or thy whole heart's store—  
The love that I bear thee will blossom and live  
When my soul has passed to the Unknown Shore ;  
The love that I bear thee will blossom and live  
When Time and Sorrow shall be no more.

## THE CHURCHYARD OF THE SEA.

FULL many a fathom buried deep  
In silent rest they lie ;  
In Ocean's coral caves they sleep  
To 'wait eternity—  
Whose lives—the Brave—the True—the Free—  
Were swallowed in the angry sea ;  
Who now have found a calmer rest  
In Ocean's breast.

'Midst shattered wrecks, 'midst treasure vast,  
The sunken wealth of ages past,  
They slumber side by side ;  
Captains and tars before the mast,  
The husband and the bride ;  
The brother bold, the sister dear,  
The hoary sage, the buccaneer,  
The meek, the sons of Pride :  
Death knows of no distinctions here  
Beneath the rolling tide !

And when our time shall come to learn  
O grave ! thy mystery,  
Where can our bones find fitter urn  
Than in thy depths, O Sea ?  
To lie beneath the restless wave  
Far in some hidden ocean cave  
With these—the Free—the True—the Brave—  
Until eternity ;  
And let the tranquil voiceless deep  
Our secrets keep.

## LOVE'S AMBUSH.

WHEN first the little God of Love,  
Descending from the skies above,  
Alit on earth, he closed his wings  
And gazed around on earthly things ;  
Then sought with eagerness to find  
A dwelling suited to his mind.  
Full long he sought with cheerless face,  
Nor found the wished-for resting-place ;  
Till, almost sinking with despair ;  
He spied a woman, young and fair.  
Quick, with a cry of glad surprise,  
Love ran and hid in woman's eyes ;  
Ambushed in those sweet eyes he lay,  
And shot his arrows every way ;  
Of many a *spark* his target made,  
On many a heart his arrows played ;  
So strong his bow, so true his aim,  
He changed each *spark* into a *flame* ;  
But flames to fiercer flames soon turned  
And while the furnace brightly burned,  
The wicked imp enjoyed the fun  
And laughed to think what he had done.  
My friend, if you'd be good and wise,  
Gaze not too long in woman's eyes.  
But if you needs must gaze—Beware !  
*The God of Love may still be there !*

## LOVE'S CONQUEST.

I SEE them gather for the fight  
    Beneath the castle wall ;  
Full many a bold and doughty knight  
Who shall, before the evening's light,  
    Within th' arena fall ;  
But now each in his pride and might  
    Awaits the bugle call.

Each knight is in full armour dressed,  
    With glittering lance in hand ;  
Brightly on breastplate, helm, and crest,  
The golden rays of morning rest ;  
    And, by ambition fanned,  
High beats within each warrior's breast  
    The hope of Edith's hand.

Each pawing war-steed shakes his mane,  
    Impatient of delay,  
And fretted by the curbing rein,  
Curvets, and paws the earth again,  
    And snorts to join the fray ;  
Then, finding all his efforts vain,  
    Yields to his rider's sway.

High o'er the lists the royal stand  
    Its lofty front uprears :  
There sits the monarch of the land,  
Bravest of all that martial band,  
    Surrounded by his peers ;  
And his the warlike mind that planned  
    That mustering of spears.

And on that serried mass of mail-clad men  
From balcony above  
A galaxy of beauty, which no pen  
Could draw save that of Love,  
Looked down with glance so arch and bright and free  
That Love his pen had dropped in ecstasy.

Fairer than all the daughters of the court,  
Who all were young and fair,  
Like some pale lily freshly culled, and brought  
Amidst the roses, and yet losing nought  
Of her pure glory there  
(Nay, rather there her matchless beauty shone  
The lovelier by the sweet comparison),  
Sits Editha the fair.

All round her head her wavy golden hair  
Clusters, then like some sea  
Falls rippling o'er her shoulders, thick and fair,  
Until it gains her knee ;  
Her eyebrows black as jet : a silken fringe  
Of kindred hue shadows each violet eye,  
Where burns a light so queenly, pure, and true,  
That of that company  
Of knights and vassals—all that courtly train—  
Not one but would have died to save her pain.

Her face is oval, and her ruby lips  
Half-parted—not in scorn—  
Like two twin rosebuds which the queen bee sips  
Upon some dewy morn,  
Reveal, like ocean pearls, her teeth of snow ;  
Her nose one straight fine line joined to a forehead low  
But wide ; her throat, an ivory column rose below :  
The clinging drapery worn



Displays the soft curves of her splendid form—  
 Model for Venus ; born to take by storm.  
 But, ever and anon, there came and went  
     Upon her cheek a hue  
 Which rivalled damask, till its power was spent.

Then once again there grew  
 A deadly pallor over all her face,  
 Her sweet eyes roamed o'er all that peopled space,  
 As if in search of one whose knightly place  
     Was vacant ; and it threw  
 A cruel anguish in those tender orbs,  
 A sickening dread, which all things else absorbs.

But hark ! the first of the alarms  
     The heralds quickly sound,  
 And chargers prance, and knights adjust their arms  
     O'er all the tourney ground ;  
 And beauties forward lean, and to their charms  
 Are added sparkling eye and rosier cheek ;  
 But whiter grew one cheek, and her heart's qualms  
     No soothing solace found ;  
 But pale, betwixt anxiety and dread ;  
 She sat like one whose only hope has fled.


Hark ! List again ! The second trumpet sounds  
     Its warning clear and shrill ;  
 Then rises, 'midst that sheen of spears and shields,  
 The Great Knight—victor in a hundred fields,  
 And all around with gathering strength there steals  
     O'er valley and o'er hill  
 The glad shout of a nation, when it feels  
 Its monarch worthy of his crown. Then seals  
 Each one his lips, while he his wish reveals :  
     “ It is my Sovereign Will,

Who proves himself the doughtiest in the land  
Hath for reward my daughter Edith's hand ;  
Ope ye the lists ! ”

Forth from the crowd rode out a knight  
Upon a coal-black steed ;  
His armour, bruised in many a fight,  
Was of wrought iron, black as night,  
And from his helmet, waving bright,  
A scarlet plume was freed ;  
All else from helm to iron spur  
Was black as wing of scavenger.

His sturdy war-steed, stoutly made,  
His burden seemed to spurn,  
And well his rider's seat displayed  
By many a prance and turn ;  
And on his ponderous iron shield  
(Weapon which he alone could wield)  
In tall red letters stood revealed,  
That all who saw might learn,  
Those flaming letters side by side,  
Spell out his haughty motto, “ Pride.”

Then, rising in his stirrups high,  
He shakes his quiv'ring lance ;  
Harsh rings his hoarse and boastful cry,  
And wild his courser's prance :—  
‘ My name is Pride. I dare you all,  
By this good lance, beneath this castle wall,  
Before my king, his peers, and courtiers all,  
And yonder maid's sweet glance ;  
For never yet in battle, list, or fight,  
Have I my equal found in any knight !



The fight was fierce ; the fight was hard and long ;  
    But now the fray is o'er ;  
And many a warrior, skilled, and brave, and strong,  
    Lies on that sanded floor ;  
And leaning hard upon his battleaxe  
To gain the strength his wounded body lacks,  
Stands Pride alone, amidst those bloody tracks  
    All dyed with blood and gore.  
His boast not vain ; for in that awful fight  
Not one was found to prove the better knight.

His armour broke, his helm clove to the eyes,  
    The gay plume cut away,  
His gallant steed lifeless beside him lies,  
    Where many another lay ;  
And in those blood-stained lists, 'midst shattered spears  
And groans of dying men and women's tears,  
His haughty head once more he proudly rears  
    The Victor of to-day !  
By sheer indomitable will he conquers pain  
And mounts another steed to fight again.

The first three knights who fell before his sword—  
    The awful blade of Pride—  
Greed, Meanness, Avarice, each a mighty lord,  
    Now silent side by side.  
Honour and Truth, both fighting nobly, fell ;  
Passion, a very demon, hot from Hell.  
Friendship, a stout old knight, who bore him well  
    And clove the helm of Pride ;  
Falsehood, a cunning knave, wily, and skilled at feint.  
Old Generosity, Young Self-Restraint.

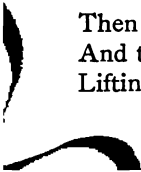
All these he slew, and many minor foes  
    Who strove to stem his wrath.  
And now his iron gauntlet down he throws,  
    But not a knight comes forth :

Then with a mighty shout the people cry,  
"There now remains no knight who dares to try  
His maiden shield against, in chivalry,  
The warrior of the North.  
Redeem, O King, thy pledge, and let us see  
The victor wed the maid of high degree !"

Then up the monarch rose, and strove to speak  
Amidst that deafening roar,  
And pale as death again grew Edith's cheek,  
And wilder than before  
Her eyes sought vainly in that heaving crowd  
For him to whom her secret troth was vowed,  
And, seeing nought, her golden head she bowed  
To Fate's relentless law ;  
When from yon distant hills, and grove of trees,  
A silver note comes floating on the breeze.

So loud, so clear, so silvery it broke  
Upon the ears of all,  
That in the mind of Pride a fear it woke  
That perhaps his star might fall ;  
Then, bursting thro' the trees at headlong speed,  
A warrior mounted on a snow-white steed  
Is seen : and Edith's heart is freed  
From thoughts which did appal,  
And, as the evening sun falls on his golden mail,  
No eyes can look thereon and yet not quail.

The lists are reached, he reins his panting steed  
Beneath the monarch's stand,  
And with a glance which well his cause doth plead,  
Surveys the lovely band ;  
Then from his courser swiftly doth alight,  
And there before her eyes, and in their sight,  
Lifting the gauntlet of the man of might,  
Restores it to his hand.



Then with an oath Pride roars in wrathful need :—  
 "Bring me fresh armour and another steed."

Now Pride is mounted, and the trumpets sound ;  
     The lances are in rest ;  
 The stallions gallop forward with a bound ;  
     Bent is each knightly crest.  
 They meet—the shock—the deadlock—and the people's  
     shout ;  
 But neither falls from his high saddle out  
 Tho' two good lances strew the ground about.  
     Can neither prove him best ?  
 Without there ! Bring fresh lances to each knight  
 Sound trump again, and onward with the fight.

Again they meet. Again each lance is split,  
     Again fresh steel is brought.  
 What ho ! Fresh topic for the minstrel's wit  
     How gallantly they fought !  
 Once more another lance, once more the shock,  
 The crash of steel on steel : I see one rock,  
 Rock in his saddle, and fall headlong down,  
     'Tis Pride. His fall is wrought ;  
 He falls upon the sand—that mighty lord—  
 Then leaps upon his feet, and draws his sword.

Now, noble minstrel, string thy tuneful lyre  
     And sing thy battle lay.  
 The stranger knight springs off his steed of fire,  
     And flings his lance away ;  
 Then, man to man, they stand upon the sand ;  
 Never in all the annals of the land  
 Such fight was fought, and well each strong right hand  
     Makes his good broadsword play.  
 But not a sound is heard save steel on steel  
 Or the sharp gasp when back both champions reel.

But quickly they recover, and again  
Fiercer the battle grows,  
And blows are showered thick as April rain,  
Yet neither backward goes.  
But, see ! Oh, Fate ! Pride one false pass has made  
And swift as thought the stranger's glittering blade  
Circles around the head defenceless laid  
And batters down his foe's,  
Crashes thro' helm and visor to the brain,  
And fairly cleaves the head of Pride in twain.

'Tis done. The ruddy life-blood stains the ground,  
And Pride at length is dead.  
Then once again the murmur flies around ;  
" Who is this knight ? " they said.  
" Who is this stranger clad in golden mail,  
Before whose steel our doughtiest champions quail,  
Who rides yon Arab with the flowing tail ?  
Let him unbar his head."  
But when he heard them, and unbarred his head,  
" 'Tis but a boy ! " in wonderment they said.

A boy, but an Apollo of a boy !  
He stood before the King,  
His handsome face diffused with love and joy,  
And in his hand a ring ;  
His hazel eyes sparkling with keen delight,  
His armour bruised and dented in the fight,  
He looked the very picture of a knight ;  
He said, " This ring I bring,  
Oh, king ! I now make my demand :  
Bestow on me thy peerless Edith's hand !

" My name is Love, they call me the Sublime,  
My wings are Mirth and Joy ;  
It is my fate all thro' existing time  
Always to be a boy.

'Tis not my maiden field, for I have fought  
Since Time, and Earth, and all things first were brought  
From Chaos ; and this sword has bought  
    Full many a victory.  
I have a few more fights ; then shall be given to me  
All things, and I shall rule eternally."

So, near the lists, where so much blood was shed,  
Love and the maid of high degree were wed.

But Love arose from by his loved one's side  
    And spoke unto the King,  
And said, " I have a balm that, whatsoe'er betide,  
    Will back the life-blood bring."  
Then quoth the monarch, eagerly :—  
" Restore my fallen knights to me ! "

Then Love stepped down, and with his healing balm  
    Gently closed up the wounds in Friendship's side ;  
Then with his silver trumpet broke the calm,  
    And Friendship rose from by the corpse of Pride ;

And Generosity and Self-Restraint he cured,  
And Truth and Honour who death had endured ;  
But Meanness, Falsehood, Passion, Pride, and Greed,  
Were left with Avarice, hungry crows to feed,  
Till some one, finding all these slaves of sin,  
Dug a big hole, and flung such carrion in.

## A JINGLE FOR MUSIC.

“ That is best which liest nearest  
Shape from that thy work of Art.”

SAID the Master : “ Build the Palace  
From the stones which lie around,  
From the blocks which are the nearest  
Lying strewn upon the ground ;  
Time will test which is best—  
Blocks which we have never tested  
Or the stones which lie around.”

So they worked and built the Palace  
From the stones which lay around,  
From the blocks which were the nearest  
Lying strewn upon the ground ;  
'Till the last block was cast  
And a stately palace builded  
From the stones which lay around.

Let us build a stately nation  
From the love that lies around,  
From the love, and truth, and honour  
Which is nearest to be found !  
Till the shout echoes out :  
“ Lo ! the strength that made the Nation  
Was the Love that girt her round.”



## THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE.

THE roll of drums, the bugle peal,  
The clink of spurs, and a martial tread,  
The prance of steeds, the rumbling wheel  
Of cannon. The sheen their bayonets shed  
Glittering keen in the morning red ;  
While the Russian Eagles float o'erhead,

Lurid the danger signals glow,  
And thicker gather the clouds of war,  
And rumours which tell of the coming foe—  
Ill-omened harbingers—fly before ;  
And then with a dim and distant roar,  
Which the echoing hills again repeat,  
Like the boom of the surf on some rock-bound shore,  
The thunder of thousands of marching feet.

Onward they come in the morning gray,  
Southwards the tides of their legions roll—  
In the gloomiest hour of Britannia's day,  
Sullenly South to their Indian goal—  
Proudly and loudly their drummers play ;  
Proudly and loudly their bugles peal ;  
But stern and stubborn to bar the way  
Stands a bristling wall of British steel.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "MORNA LEE."

A GREAT thought clothed with living words  
That burn upon the heart and brain,  
A note struck on Love's strongest chords—  
Nor struck in vain.

Not loud, but deep : mystic song  
Far-echoing thro' the Halls of Thought,  
With weird vibrations that belong  
To the Unsought.

Trembling upon the verge of things  
Seen dimly, or in broken gleams,  
Like Unknown Truths whose radiant wings  
Brighten our dreams.

A voice which from the air above  
Speaks to all hearts ; a fervid breath  
Of faith unshaken ; and a love  
Stronger than Death.

## THE SPIRIT OF NATURE.

O GENIUS of the Universe !  
In every soft or freshening breeze  
Which stirs the branches of the trees,  
I hear the music of thy voice—  
The rhythm of a mystic song  
Whose cadence haunts the spirit long,  
And bids the shades of care disperse,  
And makes the restless heart rejoice ;  
For, lo ! the presence of a power  
Unseen, but felt, hangs o'er the hour ;  
Soft as the breeze which evening brings  
I hear the rustle of its wings ;  
And feel the shadow of its might  
Like the calm silence of the night.

O Spirit of the Wilderness,  
Solemn and grand and passionless !  
Thy voice is in the winds that roam  
Without a resting-place or home ;  
Thy garb is Nature's loveliness.  
In the stern tempest's sullen roar  
I hear thy songs of triumph soar ;  
In the soft breeze that sinks and dies  
The swell of tender harmonies ;  
And wild and musical and free  
I feel their subtle influence steal  
And cast a glamour over me,  
Until I cry with fierce appeal :  
"Would that my restless heart could be  
Light as the breezes, and as free !"

## THE LAND OF SHADOWS.

“That undiscovered country from whose bourn  
No traveller returns.”

THERE is a land from whose mysterious shore  
No echoes can return to us again ;  
No sign, no sound, of gladness or of pain  
Tell of the myriads who have gone before.

There is a stream beneath whose turbid wave  
Millions have sunk, and millions yet shall sink ;  
Dark are the gath'ring shades upon the brink  
Unknown the shore its utmost waters lave.

But in the death-like silence of the night,  
When the long shadows deepen near and far,  
'Tis strange to meditate how frail a bar  
Severs the Finite from the Infinite.

Beside the darksome margin of that stream  
We, each, shall stand unaided and alone  
Upon the trembling verge of things unknown,  
Where all the Past shall melt as doth a dream.

A dream ! Why not ? Have we not dreamt before ?  
Flashes of recognition glimmer through—  
The new dreams are the old, the old the new,  
And we, in visions, pass from shore to shore.

Vague influences waken, and a ray  
Illumes the hidden chambers of the mind—  
Echoes and forms and faces left behind  
In some existence that has passed away,

Faint dreams, dim memories of bygone things  
Not wholly unfamiliar, for they seem  
The reflex of some long-forgotten dream  
Whose light and sweetness still around us clings.

Such lights will flash and vanish : as we glance  
We scarce can read the truths their beams illumine ;  
We are but children groping through the gloom,  
And all our knowledge is but ignorance.

But from the Future, from that silent sphere,  
That Shadowland no mortal foot shall tread,  
Cometh no sign, no whisper, of the dead ;  
No sound, no voice, no echo to the ear ;

No answer save the silence. And the veil  
Is lifted not, nor shall be, till we stand  
Within the confines of that Shadowland  
Upon whose verge the stoutest spirits quail.

Oh, well for him who hears with steadfast soul,  
When, like the muffled beating of a drum,  
The voice of those dark waters whispers " Come,"  
Nor fears the brink where the deep shadows roll.

Dogmas and creeds will vanish ; but the Power  
Which permeates Nature, whose diviner plan  
Is shadowed dimly in the heart of man,  
Will still uphold his soul in that stern hour.

That Power whose work is endless—never done—  
That breathes in all things in those realms unknown,  
Will bind the world's religions in one zone,  
And blend the creeds of all men into one.

## LOVE.

LOVE knows no law save love alone. It springs  
From the eternal majesty of God,  
From the infinity of God Himself,  
Essence of Life, the Sov'reignty supreme  
Which bends our natures to a higher Will ;  
And, in the fadeless bowers of Paradise  
Where amaranth flowers and thornless roses bloom,  
Where angels tread the starry floors of Heaven,  
In the celestial harmonies that roll  
Vibrating thro' the vast ethereal spheres,  
Unfathomable spaces of futurity,  
Love's voice goes forth unchallenged, absolute,  
Reigning thro' all—for God Himself is Love.  
O Power Illimitable ! Power Divine !  
That, deathless, burst th' entralling bonds of Death,  
And, rising, soared beyond th' eternal stars,  
On thy strong pinions bear our spirits up,  
So may we wear thro' all this maze of Life,  
Thro' the dark shadows of terrestrial days,  
The jewel of imperishable love  
That Time and Death and Sorrow cannot dim.

ANIMUS NON MORTALIS EST.

WHERE are they now—the poets of all time,  
Who charmed the world with melody and rhyme,  
And thoughts sublime and deep ?  
Think'st thou they have expired ? No. He who said  
Their torch is quenched, and they are cold and dead,  
Hath lied—they do but sleep.

And in another purer atmosphere,  
Their songs shall peal more sweetly and more clear  
Than e'en they did on earth ;  
And gath'ring strength from what we cannot see  
Shall swell in one great burst of harmony,  
With wider nobler girth.

## WAR.

IMPERIOUS Goddess ! proud Bellona ! stay,  
So I may strive to read thy secret heart ;  
Tear from thy cruel face the mask away,  
And let men see thee as thou really art.  
That lofty air, that brave yet scornful smile,  
But hides the pitiless stern features 'neath  
The mask by which thou dost men's hearts beguile  
To risk their lives to win thy laurel-wreath.  
Thy gorgeous pageantry, thy nodding plumes,  
The martial music's glorious stirring swell,  
Are but the shrouds for twice ten thousand tombs—  
For twice ten thousand but Death's solemn knell.  
Two hostile hosts ablaze with glittering steel ;  
The thunder of artillery ; the shock  
Of charging squadrons ; the proud bugle-peal—  
Clear, loud, yet silvery, as tho' to mock  
Some dying soldier's agonized appeal  
To Heaven for mercy ; then the tiny square,  
Lost in the dense gray haze of battle-cloud  
While charging hordes press round it everywhere,  
Still sternly stubborn—and as sternly proud,  
Defiant, and immovable—and like the rock  
O'er which old Ocean's mountain billows tear,  
Break, burst in thunder, yet can not  
Move from its native fastnesses one jot.  
And men—with quickened senses as they hear  
The bugle-call, the clash as steel meets steel,



And see their native banner's crest uprear  
High o'er them—then can only feel,  
As the battalions of the foe appear  
In columned grandeur nearer and more near,  
Their pulses throb, and the warm life-blood glow,  
And care for nought save victory o'er the foe.  
Thus ever, Goddess ! when with naked sword  
Thou standest, crying "Glory—onward go !"  
Men have been ready to obey thy word,  
Nor count the odds, nor heed that blood must flow ;  
And so it is, has been, will be, thy plan  
So long as earth is earth, and man is man.

That is one side the picture ; but I would—  
If so be that I can a landscape draw—  
Depict both light and shade, as artist should,  
And paint the awful shades of glorious war.  
I see the moonlight on the battle-field  
When all is silent and the fight is o'er,  
And there Death's harvest ; 'tis a mighty yield,  
Yet hath he reaped such yields full oft before.  
And there they lie—not singly, but in heaps,  
In ghastly heaps ; the dying with the dead  
All intermingled—while the cold wind sweeps  
Across and moans their requiem overhead.  
And this is War ! Great, glorious, awful War !—  
Whose praises poets still are wont to sing—  
With all its pomp, and majesty, and awe !  
Yet, to my mind, it seems a gruesome thing  
To think that for each wretch maimed, wounded, torn  
By shot, and left stark dead upon the plain,  
Some loving hearts (tho' far away) must mourn—  
Must weep in bitterness—must weep in vain.  
"He dies with honour who doth fall in war,"  
They say, and count the heroes of the strife.

Can this, the loved one to his home restore,  
Or fill his nostrils with the breath of life ?  
A warrior's grave they deck with laurel leaf,  
And honour him whose honour knew no stain,  
But to his nearest (in their hopeless grief),  
The laurel fades—the cypress will remain.  
Imperious Goddess ! when it is thy plan  
With martial majesty to set the task  
For man to battle with his brother man,  
Show each thy countenance—without the mask.

## TO THE NEW YEAR.

Go forth, O Year, bearing our destinies—  
The hopes, joys, sorrows, and the happiness  
Which make the sum of our existence here !  
The burden of all human life and death  
Is on thy shoulders, and from day to day  
Will broaden as thy steps draw nearer home.  
Lift then thy torch of promise and fair hope  
To light the millions on their onward march ;  
And, if thy reign be wise, remember this,—  
No lesser power than Love can rule a world  
Of such complexity of end and aim.

## THE SORREL MARE.

I SAW an angler by a stream  
Which flowed on gently, rippling by,  
And at every sound a watchful gleam  
Came and went in his **hazel** eye ;  
And every day for a week or two  
In that self-same spot his line he threw.

There is an old manor-house not far away,  
With many a quaint old gateway and tower,  
And every morn at the break of day,  
Ere the sun has risen in all his power,  
A gray old groom on a sorrel mare  
Comes riding through the gateway there.

In the town hard by, at the " Boar's Head " sign  
(A tavern where liquor is cheap and good),  
Some Roundhead soldiers over their wine  
Are yarning as only old comrades could ;  
And at last some one—old Praise-the-Lord Brown—  
Begins running his comrades' horses down.

" There is no horse like my stallion gray  
From Yorkshire's moors to old London town  
For speed and strength, and courage and stay ;  
No racer in England can gallop him down !  
Ho ! comrades all, in a flagon of ale  
Here's health and long life to old Martingale ! "

Then up they stand and their glasses clink ;  
" Here's health to old Martingale ! " they say ;  
And down goes the liquor without a shrink  
As with jovial faces the toast they drink  
Of Praise-the-Lord Brown's old stallion gray.  
" Ho, fools ! " think I ; " none of you, I swear,  
Have seen the stride of that sorrel mare ! "

A day or so after, the news flies round—  
" The Roundheads have captured Charles the King ! "  
The Crop-ears, who've got him safe and sound,  
Will past the Manor their prisoner bring.  
But still as before (what I'm telling is true)  
In that self-same spot that angler threw.

They come ! they come ! those crop-eared curs ;  
And he in the middle must be the King ;  
I hear horses tramp, and the jingle of spurs,  
As 'neath their riders the chargers spring ;  
But that angler bold is quite unconcerned,  
Nor have I as yet his secret learned.

But see ! They pass quite close to the brook,  
And the angler turns to see them go by ;  
He makes a swift sign with a meaning look,  
And I see the King has caught his eye ;  
But of all that crowd none the sign did see  
Save I and the King and that angler free.

They pass, and the angler unscrews his rod ;  
His fishing is done for a good long while ;  
He picks up his basket from off the sod,  
And goes away with a curious smile.  
But what is that close to the hedge over there ?  
Zounds ! It's old Giles on the sorrel mare !

By good St. George ! 'twas a sight to see  
When the fisher let go his rod and line  
And the mare from old Tom got nearly free,  
As she whinnied and pranced and commenced to  
whine.

Ah ! well, my bonny, you knew who was there ;  
And you've carried that fisher before, I swear !

They talk for a minute—he and old Giles—  
While the mare puts her muzzle right into his hand ;  
“ Is she fit,” he asks, with one of his smiles,  
“ To carry me down to Dover's sands ? ”  
“ Fit ? Yes,” says Tom ; “ and further than that,  
If she ain't, Sir Fulke, I'll eat my hat.”

One foot's in the stirrup—but “ Hist ! can't ye hear ? ”  
And back 'midst the oak trees the cavalier strode.  
“ I hear a clatter of hoofs so near,  
They must be coming right down the road ;  
By our Lady ! a troop !—and Praise-the-Lord Brown !  
Zounds ! He's found me out, and will run me down ! ”

Now into the saddle without a word,  
And turn her head for Dover's sand ;  
And over the fence she flies like a bird,  
And down the road comes that crop-eared band ;  
But riding first, on his stallion gray,  
Old Praise-the-Lord Brown shows his men the way.

“ There he goes ! ” yells Brown : “ the spy ! the spy !  
The plagues of Egypt be on his head ;  
And fifty pounds of my pay give I  
To the man who catches him 'live or dead ! ”  
“ Aha ! ” chuckles Giles from behind the hedge,  
“ Your turtle's too close to the water's edge ! ”

Then over the hedge with a bound they go ;  
The gray horse high o'er the blackthorn sped ;  
They are racing now and their hands are low,  
But the chase is already two fields ahead.  
Quoth Giles to himself, " A brave mount, I declare,  
But 'twill take a better to catch the mare ! "

Sir Fulke stands up in his stirrups high,  
And glances round and waves his hand ;  
He has gained every stride—three fields now lie  
'Twixt the sorrel mare and that crop-eared band ;  
But leading his comrades by half a field  
Steadily onwards the gray horse stealed.

O ! 'tis gallant to ride on a mare like Bess !  
Firm turf beneath, and a gaining stride ;  
And never she seemed to feel work less  
As he patted her neck with honest pride ;  
Like clockwork she galloped, like lightning flew  
Thro' the lush grass heavy with diamond dew.

But straight ahead looms a bullfinch fence,  
Black and gaunt with a stiff oak rail ;  
He steadies the mare ; she knows his sense—  
She shortens her stride yet does not quail ;  
O'er the rasping spires like a dart she sped :  
He needs such cattle who rides for his head !

" O my Bessie ! " he cries, exulting now,  
As he slackens speed ; he must save her strength :  
He wipes the sweat from his wringing brow  
And takes up a hole in his stirrup's length ;  
Full well he knew had she failed him there  
It had been his last ride on his sorrel mare.

But the gray is a gallant horse and true—  
Over timber or grass he is hard to beat—  
And the rider who steers him is dauntless too,  
With an iron nerve and a faultless seat :  
Scarce stirred the tips of the bullfinch tall  
As he rose like a bird o'er that thorny wall.

Sir Fulke has dallied a little too long  
And the stallion behind him can travel and stay ;  
But he laughs, for the sorrel is galloping strong,  
And he shouts to Brown in his careless way :—  
"The mare 'gainst the gray for a flagon of sack,  
And my head is the stake if you take me back !"

And now o'er timber, and now o'er grass,  
O'er plough, and stubble, and field, and fen,  
O'er blackthorn walls like a flash they pass,  
Eager horses and reckless men ;  
As she tops the ditch by the slope of the hill,  
Three fields ahead she is leading still.

With arching neck and a length'ning stride  
Splashed and spattered with foam and mire,  
She does not flinch where the brook is wide ;  
Where the clay is softest she does not tire ;  
The heart that ne'er quailed in the martial strife  
Will not fail him now when he rides for his life.

The old mill race runs swift and deep,  
He can hear the swollen waters roar ;  
He can see the current eddy and sweep,  
But safety lies on the farther shore :  
Bold is the rider and staunch the mare  
Who faces the breadth of its waters there.



But Sir Fulke is calm, if the stream is wide ;  
His hand is steady, his face is set ;  
The heart that danger has proved and tried  
In chase and battle is dauntless yet :  
He laughs as he thinks of the troopers near,  
She is sound as a bell, she can jump like a deer.

From bank to bank thirty feet if an inch !  
—The thud of her hoofs is a steadier beat ;—  
She pricks her ears, but she does not flinch ;  
He settles down with a firmer seat :  
A swift rush—a wild bound—she shoots thro' the air  
And lands him safe with a foot to spare.

“ Safe ! Safe at last ! Long live King Charles !  
I will toast him in Dover ere set of sun ;  
Baffled by Bess be all crop-eared carles,  
Who follow her heels in a hunting run ;  
An old jack-boot and a flagon of ale  
Is all I would offer for Martingale.”

“ Not so ! ” quoth old Brown, “ I’ve another Bess here,  
We’ll prove which is best, as you’re anxious to try.”  
The carbine was true, and the target was near,  
And keen down the barrel he laid his eye :  
A flash—a report—and an agonized scream—  
And the sorrel lay, dying, across the stream.

“ Dying ? Not *dying*, but *dead* ! Bess is gone,  
And never again will that gallant heart beat !  
Oh, never again on her back to be borne !  
Oh, never again her soft whinnies to greet !  
Be it rider or horse, be it soul or clay,  
No braver spirit has passed away.

"There she lies with her glossy coat muddy and red,  
And those rich brown eyes glazed which so brightly  
could shine ;  
A vile Crop-ear's bullet has shattered her head  
Who gave up her young life a forfeit for mine !  
Oh, Praise-the-Lord Brown, you've a long score to pay ;  
And I'll pay it with interest settling day !"

No need now, ye bullies, for further pursuit :  
They forded the stream and arrested their prey.  
No answer he gives them ; his strong voice is mute ;  
And their summons to rise up he does not obey :  
But sits still like one stunned, with her head on his knees,  
And the dead sorrel mare is the sole thing he sees.

Then slowly he rises and o'er her does stand,  
His handsome face wearing a dull look of pain,  
As he stoops o'er her corse, with his knife in his hand,  
And severs a lock from her beautiful mane ;  
Then they bind him and carry him off to the town,  
But he speaks not a word, and looks moodily down.

Sir Fulke was not murdered, nor hanged as a spy ;  
Though he stood before Cromwell and spoke for his king ;  
But was doomed for long years in a prison to lie,  
Till from over the water the glad news took wing ;  
And Praise-the-Lord Brown, in a drunken fray,  
Was shot through the head on his stallion gray.

To the Second King Charles now the English look ;  
To Sir Fulke the manor has been restored ;  
His boys now fish in the rippling brook,  
Or play at men with their father's sword ;  
And oft by old Giles is the story told  
Of the sorrel mare Bess and her rider bold.

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